

Witnessing the impacts of tawâw on public administration and policy in the City of New Westminster;
Indigenous Ways of Knowing are dismantling silos and transforming service delivery and
policy in a Canadian Municipality

By

Jessica Tailfeathers

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
in the School of Public Administration

© Jessica Tailfeathers, 2025

University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This project may not be reproduced in whole or in part by photocopy or other means
without the permission of the author.

Supervisory Committee

- Client:** Christina Coolidge
The City of New Westminster
- Co-Supervisor:** Dr. Lynne Siemens
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria
- Co-Supervisor:** Dr. Susanne Thiessen
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria
- Community member:** Elder William Nelson
Nisga'a and Gitksan families

A Note to the Reader

Do you know what two-eyed seeing is? It is important to understand in order to consume this research:

Mi'kmaw Elder and author Dr. Albert Marshall defines Two-Eyed Seeing as learning to see from one eye with the strengths of [Indigenous Knowledges] and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of mainstream knowledges [Western knowledges] and ways of knowing, and to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all (Bartlett et al., 2012; Reid et al., 2020; as cited by Sha, 2021, p.21).

Many Indigenous academics practice Western methodologies and vice-versa. Both methodologies are interwoven within this research. The only distinction will be made for storytelling components, which will be italicized and written in red, out of respect to the ancestors of the Elder described within this research, Elder William, who says: *“red is the only colour our ancestors can see”* (Personal Communications, Elder William, Sept.11, 2024). *The colour red chosen for this report is entitled “Free Speech Red” and feels quite fitting to this work (Dopely Colors, 2022).* Although Indigenous research is practiced by non-Indigenous people and vice-versa: the distinction is Indigenous research must benefit Indigenous communities and not continue to cause harm by perpetuating the colonial gaze (Dodson, 1994, p.3). The colonial gaze being a tool of observational research used as a means of justified control (Dodson, 1994, p.3); arguably the aforementioned continues today, regardless of this knowledge. Indigenous research from the Community Development perspective is rooted in social justice, and the researcher must answer how their research contributes to the communities it has researched (Hayward et al., 2021). This research answers these pieces within the positionality statement section of this document.

Do not be fooled by this deviation from the mainstream academic style: this paper is for everyone and will benefit organizations and municipalities if they choose to read it. This report has also been tested for accessibility.

Another note of importance: it was requested by the client to have the word tawâw always be lower case, which means, while reading this document even if the sentence begins with the word tawâw, it is still lower case.

Acknowledgements

This research began with an invitation: an invitation to enter a community's circle and witness its beauty. In Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being, sharing in circle often begins by acknowledging place, and in this case, places.

The places

This report was written on the ancestral land of the Blackfoot people, Figure 1, – Kainai, Siksika, Piikani and Amskapi Pikuni. This land is now also known as Treaty 7 territory. Treaty 7 signatories include: the Siksika Nation, Piikani Nation, Kainai Nation, the Îethka Nakoda Wîcastabi, and the people of the Tsuut'ina Nation. The land is also home to the Northwest Métis of District 5 and Elbow Métis of District 6.

Figure 1

A photograph taken by the researcher of Chief Mountain while visiting the family reservation, The Blood Reserve



Data collection for this report occurred on the unceded territories of the hə́nqəmíə́m-speaking people, Figure 2, which includes Kwikwetlem, Kwantlen, Qayqayt, Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

Figure 2

A photograph taken by the researcher of The Fraser River on the first trip to New Westminster for tawâw



The researcher for this project attended the University of Victoria, Figure 3, and would like to acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəḡən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəḡən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Figure 3

A photograph taken of the researcher, by friend Jen Arbo, in front of The First Peoples House on The University of Victoria Campus



Situating oneself to place allows us to reflect about what we intend to bring to the place we are and to respect what the land is offering you in these present moments and the moments of our past and future. Land-connection and land-based practices are Indigenous Ways of Knowing (Wildcat, 2014). It is critical to consume this report by first situating yourself to the land you are on.

The relationships

I want to express my appreciation for the relationships I've strengthened and built throughout this research journey. Firstly, I want to thank my husband, Jared Tailfeathers, for not only supporting this experience, but physically and emotionally carrying me through it at times. You are equilibrium personified and I dedicate this work to you. I would also like to thank my children, Joni and Sage, for their patience and love during the difficult times of this work, I love you. My love also goes to Sootaa, whom we lost along the way.

Thank-you to my friends: Jen Arbo, who introduced me to tawâw and this opportunity; to Margy MacMillian, for being a guiding mentor my entire adult academic career; and to Heather Belecky, who hosted me during my Master's Residencies. The three of you have supported me emotionally throughout this experience and I am deeply grateful for you.

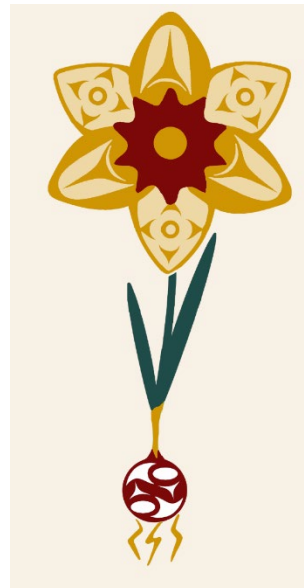
Gratitude to my parents for instilling the importance of education in me, and to my sister for always being my cheerleader and champion; I love you, and all my extended family.

Thank-you to my professors: Dr. Lynne Siemens for pushing my work to be its best version and to Dr. Susanne Thiessen for understanding this work so profoundly.

The making of this report would not be possible if it were not for the research participants of tawâw I want to thank all those who have participated and in particular to Christina Coolidge and Elder William. Their dedication to tawâw and all the beauty that is that space would not live and breathe without them. To acknowledge Christina Coolidge this report would like to share her artwork below, Figure 4. A daffodil, which she says symbolizes truth and reflection (City of New Westminster, 2024). May this daffodil inspire truth and reflection within this report and those who consume it.

Figure 4

A screen capture taken by the researcher of Christina Coolidge's art titled: A daffodil



Executive Summary

Introduction

tawâw, pronounced in English as ta-wow, is an Indigenous-aligned program created by Christina Coolidge and held at New Westminster's City Hall every Wednesday. tawâw is where all City Staff are welcome to meet from various business units to eat soup and Bannock, not only with each other, but with their Elder-in-residence, Elder William. The inception of tawâw began when Christina Coolidge said she needed her Elder with her if she were to aid the Reconciliation efforts for the City of New Westminster and wanted to introduce him to City Staff. The Indigenous-led program is held in an in-person only, non-hierarchical, safe space; and maintains an Indigenous Worldview that practices relationship-building, storytelling and communal eating.

Methodology and Methods

This research adopted a qualitative approach to understand the policy and relationship impacts of having an Indigenous-aligned and Indigenous-led program inside a colonial system, using a two-eyed seeing methodology. This approach integrates both Indigenous and Western methodologies and was chosen to maintain the spirit that is occurring at tawâw, which is one where an Indigenous program occurs weekly inside the oldest colonial city in British Columbia.

The research was grounded in Indigenous epistemologies, ontologies, and paradigm positioning the researcher as a participant in tawâw; developing an open collaborative relationship that builds on stories with the Indigenous Leaders of the program. It is of value to review the positionality of the researcher, which is further explored within the [positionality](#) section of this project. Taking an Indigenous approach must be done with the intention to reduce harm to Indigenous participants, more on this in the [ethics](#) section of this project.

Grounded theory and case study methodologies were employed to explore the impacts of tawâw on municipal employees and policies in New Westminster. Data collection combined Indigenous and Western methods, including journaling after impromptu one-on-one conversations with the Indigenous Leaders of tawâw, in-person attendance for observational notetaking, table-top discussions that were recorded and transcribed and semi-structured interviews that were recorded and transcribed.

Sixty-six participants engaged in sessions of tawâw during data collection [Group 1], 15 participants took part in the table-top discussions [Group 2], 11 participants took part in semi-structured interviews [Group 3] and two participants, Christina Coolidge and Elder William, took part in the one-on-one impromptu conversations [Group 4]. Many participants for Groups 2 and 3 were pulled from Group 1, making the final number of unique participants 74, ensuring comprehensive data collection across multiple layers and approaches.

Key Findings

With over two years of Wednesdays passing with soup, Bannock and valuable conversation, it was time to see the policy and relationship impacts and outcomes of tawâw; as well as potential recommendations for other municipalities and organizations.

The findings reveal a conceptual framework of three nested circles that scale the motivations and impacts of tawâw:

- The Self – Individual experiences initially driven by food; participants return for hugs and healing/resiliency, with impacts including physical and emotional nourishment.
- The Community – Collective experiences in a non-hierarchical safe space. The impacts include learning through participatory action/storytelling, building relationships with staff from various departments, and fostering a sense of community. These impacts become new motivations for continued in-person attendance.
- The Greater Community – Broader impacts on service delivery, external relationships and policy, influenced by tawâw.

All nested circles were found to be influenced or guided by Christina Coolidge or Elder William.

Discussion and Analysis

The Self and The Community are interconnected, with individual motivations feeding into the growth and maintenance of the workplace community. tawâw provides a non-hierarchical, safe space where participants can be their authentic selves, fostering connections that positively impact municipal work projects and policymaking. Removing barriers to progress on municipal work projects can expedite completion and save taxpayer money, positively impacting The Greater Community through improved service delivery.

Participants and documentation support that tawâw had an influence on projects, programs, services and policies at the City of New Westminster, which included: The Missing Persons Unit for the New Westminster Police Department, The Crisis Response Pilot Project, the Second Responders Program, Honorariums and general administrative documents containing the word rightsholder over the word stakeholder. External policy influence by tawâw even extended beyond the City of New Westminster to Metro Vancouver.

From the Western perspective this may seem like colleagues sharing a meal, but from the Indigenous Worldview it is a relationship that begins with a bowl of soup. It is through the freedom to share, listen and learn from story in tawâw's non-hierarchical safe-space that participants have built their community, making these motivations to return to community additional key drivers to success. The attendees of tawâw want to be themselves, share themselves, learn and participate as a community over a bowl of soup, that is tawâw's community identity; it is safe, relational, emotional and nourishing.

Options to Consider and Recommendations

tawâw created opportunities for policy and service delivery impacts on the City of New Westminster, by using Indigenous approaches to learning and relationship-building, resulting in a positive workplace community and culture that increased employee commitment. Organizations can stand to benefit from understanding the motivations for attendance of tawâw so they can in turn increase employee relationships and commitment, which can impact job satisfaction and performance. tawâw has created employee motivation and engagement impacting The Individual, The Community and The Greater Community levels. Recommendations for other municipalities and organizations include:

1. Hiring an Indigenous Relations Team

Bringing in Indigenous perspectives into workplaces and policies. Providing them with the autonomy to implement and make decisions on Indigenous-aligned programs and policies.

2. **Cross-departmental Community of Practice**
Implementing a cross-departmental Community of Practice for employees that is Indigenous-led. An interconnected approach can positively impact organizational performance by fostering a supportive and collaborative environment centered around relationship-building.
3. **Weekly meetings with an Elder**
Connecting with an Elder and gaining Indigenous knowledge improved service delivery at the City of New Westminster. Employees can benefit from meeting with an Elder weekly for storytelling and Indigenous teachings.
4. **Multi-year contract for Indigenous Employees**
Policy was also influenced by the hiring of an Indigenous Relations Advisor, but impacts took over two years to see from the start of tawâw. Therefore, any implementation of Indigenous knowledge or influence must be supported by a multi-year contract.
5. **In-person communal gatherings for employees**
Staff and workplace culture can benefit from communing together in a safe, non-hierarchical space, where staff can bring their authentic selves. It is highly recommended that gatherings maintain a consistent schedule, be in-person and include communal eating. The elements of storytelling and sharing are also important elements during these sessions.
6. **Communal gatherings to connect with partners and residents**
In-person gatherings with communal eating were not only beneficial for employees but was also beneficial for relationship-building with partners, residents and the unhoused community. Communal eating is highly recommended as a powerful engagement tool for organizations to foster connection and collaboration in the future.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Supervisory Committee.....	ii
A Note to the Reader	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
The places	iv
The relationships.....	vi
Executive Summary.....	viii
Introduction	viii
Methodology and Methods	viii
Key Findings	viii
Discussion and Analysis.....	ix
Options to Consider and Recommendations	ix
Table of Contents	xi
List of Figures / Tables.....	xiv
Definitions in the context of this project	xv
This research is guided by	xvi
Introduction	1
Problem Statement	2
Project Objectives, Scope and Research Questions	3
Introduction	3
Research Questions.....	3
Project Objectives	4
Scope.....	4
Background	5
Media Coverage	6
Positionality Statement.....	7
Thematic Literature Review	9
Introduction	9
Indigenous Ways of Knowing with Municipalities	9
Indigenous Tokenism in Policymaking.....	10
Indigenizing Policymaking.....	11
Conclusion of Thematic Literature Review	13
Methodology, Conceptual framework and Methods.....	14
Methodology.....	14
Methodical approach	14
Ethics	14
Qualitative Approaches	15
Indigenous methodologies	15
Methods.....	16
Indigenous methods	16

Mainstream/Western methods	16
Participant groups	17
Group 1 – observational data.....	17
Group 2 – table-top discussions.....	18
Group 3 – semi-structured interviews	18
Group 4 – Elder and Indigenous Relations Advisor	18
Summary of participants.....	18
Data Analysis and Approach	19
Document Analysis.....	20
Findings	21
Introduction	21
The Self.....	22
Introduction	22
Hugs	23
Resiliency/healing	24
The Importance of Food.....	25
Conclusion.....	28
The Community.....	28
Introduction	28
Sense of Community	29
Storytelling/Participatory Action	30
Absence of hierarchy.....	33
Relationship-building/silo-breaking	35
The Value of In-person meetings	38
Conclusion.....	39
The Greater Community	40
Introduction	40
External Relationship-Building	40
Policy discussions.....	41
Conclusion.....	45
Impact of Christina and Elder William	46
Introduction	46
The Impact of Hiring Indigenous Staff.....	46
Presence in the data.....	47
Setting up tawâw.....	48

Conclusion.....	48
Findings conclusion.....	49
Discussion and Analysis.....	51
Answering part 1 of the research question.....	51
Introduction.....	51
Document analysis.....	51
Looking at all policy impacts altogether.....	55
Conclusion.....	58
Answering part 2 of the Research Question.....	58
What are the key drivers behind these reforms?.....	59
Motivating the individual.....	59
Motivating the Community.....	60
Motivating the workplace and why other organizations should partake.....	62
Conclusion.....	63
Answering additional Secondary Research Questions.....	64
How has tawâw strengthened reconciliation and decolonization goals?.....	64
Have other Western city administrations, similar in size to New Westminister, (BC, AB, SK, MB) conducted similar programs to tawâw?.....	64
Limitations of Analysis and Areas for Further Research.....	66
Recommendations.....	67
Next Steps.....	68
For Municipalities.....	68
For all organizations.....	68
For New Westminister.....	68
Conclusion.....	70
References.....	71
Appendix A.....	80
Appendix B.....	81
Appendix C.....	82
Appendix D.....	83
Appendix E.....	86
Appendix F.....	89
Appendix G.....	94
Appendix H.....	96

List of Figures / Tables

Figure 1	iv
Figure 2	iv
Figure 3	v
Figure 4	vii
Figure 5	11
Figure 6	19
Figure 7	20
Figure 8	22
Figure 9	23
Figure 10	25
Figure 11	26
Figure 12	28
Figure 13	29
Figure 14	31
Figure 15	33
Figure 16	35
Figure 17	39
Figure 18	41
Figure 19	46
Figure 20	48
Figure 21	50
Figure 22	85

Definitions in the context of this project

Decolonization: for the purposes of this project, Decolonization means to question, unlearn and dismantle the colonial structures within government and replace the structure with something new that incorporates the original forms of governing from Turtle Island (Asadullah, 2011, p.28). This research will focus more on a process and the structures that maintain that process rather than the entire colonial structure.

Indigenizing: taking an Indigenous approach, which varies within the context of the sentence. This project talks about Indigenizing policymaking at the municipal level; therefore, it means taking an Indigenous approach to policymaking (Ens, 2021, p.22). The approach is likely influenced by a compilation of Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Indigenous Worldviews, and Indigenous Voices. None of which are the same thing. It is important to note that Indigenous Ways of Knowing is not the same as bringing in Indigenous peoples to express their opinions or share their personal experiences, because that is Indigenous Voices.

Indigenous inclusion: in the context of this paper means to include Indigenous peoples' Ways of Knowing/Being/Understanding and their voices into conversations regarding the topic of this specific research (Ens, 2021, p.22).

Indigenous and Indigenous people/peoples: unless otherwise stated in this paper this is reference to the Indigenous [original] people who reside on the land known by many as Turtle Island or Canada/U.S.A.

Indigenous voices: what Indigenous people have to say, with regards to their own thoughts, perspectives, opinions and experiences (Peters, 2016, p.321).

Indigenous Ways of Knowing/Being/Understanding: used as a combination of Indigenous knowledge and cultural traditions. Specifically, place-based knowledge that are unique to their environments/tribes/Nations (Hernandez, 2020, p.8). Knowing = what they know [epistemology]. Being = how they act [ontology]. Understanding = how they see the world and use their knowledge [axiology].

Indigenous Lens: when someone is able to apply Indigenous Ways of Knowing/Being/Understanding to a specific context, situation, work, place etc.

Indigenous Worldviews: Indigenous people are not monoliths, but there are specific Indigenous Worldviews that are mentioned within various pieces of literature. Within the context of this paper Indigenous Worldviews refers to the relational interconnectedness of keeping harmony within various geographies, peoples, beings, ecosystems and medicine to maintain a balanced and connected system, based on "relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution" (Harris & Wasilewski, 2004).

Symbolic or performative engagement and/or collaboration: these terms are related to Arnstein's *ladder of citizen participation* on the rung of "tokenism" where the engagement or collaboration is led by the colonial structure/body/organization and said colonial structure intends on moving forward with the outcome they wish to have regardless of the engagement/collaboration (Arnstein, 1969). Making it more symbolic or performative.

tawâw: to some tawâw is merely a gathering, to some it is an event and others it is a program. This project will refer to tawâw as all of those, as it is all of those things and more. tawâw is held every

Wednesday at the municipal government Town Hall of New Westminster where internal staff meet from various business units to eat soup and Bannock with each other and their Elder-in-residence, Elder William Nelson (Elder William), [more on Elder William in Appendix A], as well as their Indigenous Relations Advisor, Christina Coolidge (Personal Communications, Christina Coolidge, October 5, 2023).

This research is guided by

Articles 15.2, 18 and 21.1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Calls to Action (CTA) #43 and #44:

Article 15.2 of UNDRIP “States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society” (Assembly, 2007, p.14).

Article 18 “Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions” (Assembly, 2007, p.15-16).

Article 21.1 Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security (Assembly, 2007, p.17).

TRC CTA #43: We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015-b, p.4).

TRC CTA #44: We call upon the Government of Canada to develop a national action plan, strategies, and other concrete measures to achieve the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015-b, p.4).

Introduction

Christina Coolidge, Indigenous Relations Advisor for the City of New Westminster, has taken a chance, she's invited an external researcher into her circle, to review something important to her: tawâw [pronounced in English as ta-wow]. tawâw is held at New Westminster's City Hall every Wednesday. From the naked eye it appears to be a gathering amongst colleagues over lunch; however, it offers much more than that. tawâw is where all City Staff are welcome to meet from various business units to eat soup and Bannock, not only with each other, but with their Elder-in-residence, Elder William. The inception of tawâw began when Christina Coolidge said she needed her Elder with her if she were to aid the Reconciliation efforts for the City of New Westminster, and wanted to introduce him to City Staff. When discussing this idea with Elder William he told Christina: "Oh, I'll bring some Bannock" and Christina said, "Oh, I'll bring some soup" (Personal Communications, Christina Coolidge, October 5, 2023).

To understand tawâw, it's important to understand the voices of tawâw. What better way than through the words written by Christina Coolidge, in an email she shared with colleagues on the first anniversary of tawâw:

Greetings friends and colleagues! I hope you are well.

This week marks our tawâw (Soup and Bannock) one-year anniversary. Can you believe it?

*In September of last year, I had been working for the City just over six months. I was still getting to know you, testing the waters, and trying to discern if I was safe or not; safe to be myself; safe to be Indigenous; safe to be as honest as I needed to be to effect real change in a traditionally colonial institution. When Elder William and I started to make plans for him to come and hang out with us, I was excited about the possibilities. I wanted you to know him, and to know the love of an Elder, but as I started working out the logistics, I was filled with fear. I had to make sure that he was safe too. This man, who has been through so much already, who had experienced so much loss and pain could not be harmed by my tendency to believe in the best of people. I did believe in you. I trusted you, but what if I was wrong? I couldn't sleep. I couldn't eat. It would bring me to tears thinking about it. I kept imagining the two of us sitting in an empty room, me with my enormous pot of soup and him with his tub of Bannock, alone, feeling rejected and embarrassed. So, I did what I do and I shared with the Senior Management Team about how I was feeling. I shared my fears and I asked them to carry that weight with me, the weight of keeping an Indigenous Elder, **my** Indigenous Elder safe and making sure he felt welcome.*

*So, the day comes. I'm nervous but hopeful. Elder William arrives. We set up the room and we wait. One by one, you trickled in. Each of you wearing your orange shirts to show your support for him, and for me. So many of you came. By 12:30, there was standing room only, and all of a sudden, amidst the excitement, the chatter, and the laughter, I became overwhelmed with gratitude. I stood in the middle of that room and cried. I don't think I could ever truly express to you how much it meant to me, and how much it means to me still. He is one of the most important people in my life, and you made sure that I knew that you supported me and you've made sure he knows that he has found a home with us. The presence of an elder as an **Elder** at the City is significant. We've had so many people from all over the Lower Mainland, from other municipalities, corporations and institutions take notice and recognize that decolonization does not have to be so scary or even difficult.*

And it all started when you walked into that room, wearing your orange shirts, enjoying a bowl of soup and a piece of Bannock.

With over two years of Wednesdays passing with soup, Bannock and valuable conversation, it is time to see the impacts and outcomes of tawâw; as well as potential recommendations other municipalities can take and apply to themselves.

tawâw is described as an “Indigenous-aligned program” run by Christina Coolidge, (Personal Communications, Christina Coolidge, October 5, 2023), which she defines as: “programs, processes, and initiatives that demonstrate respect for the holistic worldview, and include practices such as relationship-building, storytelling, and communal thinking” (Personal Communications, Christina Coolidge, January 3, 2024). The program was first organized by Christina Coolidge and informally facilitated by Elder-in-residence, Elder William in September of 2022 (Renouf-a, 2022). These Elder-in-residence and tawâw programs offer something few [if any] have seen within municipalities: Indigenous Knowledges folded into the centre.

In New Westminster’s Year of Truth Journal, Christina Coolidge shares that the Elder-in-residence program is not just about tawâw: “Elder William is also available to provide advice on special projects, attend meetings or provide one-on-one counsel for staff who want or need a connection with an Elder” (2023, p.24). For the purposes of this study, tawâw will be the only program researched, but it is important to note that the Elder-in-residence is present at all days of tawâw.

Problem Statement

tawâw is unique programming that works to bring Indigenous Knowledges into the centre of a colonial structure. “[Christina] Coolidge says the point [of tawâw] is for everyone to find a creative, unifying way forward when it comes to truth and reconciliation” (Renouf, 2022-b). After two years of tawâw Christina and the City of New Westminster would like to understand the impacts tawâw has had on their staff and city.

The program, tawâw, aligns to the TRC’s definition of Reconciliation: “. . . establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between [Indigenous] and non-[Indigenous] peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, an acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015-a, p. 6). Reconciliation is a complex but important topic as said by the TRC: “...the [T]ruth and [R]econciliation [C]ommission website assumes reconciliation is important, implying its value by posing the question “why does reconciliation matter to you?” in lieu of “does reconciliation matter” (Kim, 2014, p.72). This research accepts the notion that Reconciliation is important due to the historical context and the current political and policy-based environment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Canadian government policies continue to negatively impact Indigenous people at a disproportionate rate; Indigenous people are overrepresented in foster-care (Hobson, 2022), prisons (Phan Nay, 2023), and as victims of violence (Perreault, 2022). “Indigenous people in Canada have a higher unemployment rate, and lower levels of educational attainment than non-Indigenous people. They have disproportionately more inadequate housing and poorer health outcomes” (Department of Justice, 2023). The situation is dire and the efficacy of the government to impact change has not been proven successful (Buric, 2023); we see this in the 2013 *Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act*, created “...to support First Nations’ access to clean, reliable drinking water and effective treatment of

wastewater. However, First Nations voiced concerns about this legislation during ongoing engagement since 2018, saying the law was not effective” (Government of Canada-a, 2023).

Change in various disciplines has been demanded by advocacy groups (Taylor, 2023; Deer, 2023; White, 2023; Saji et al., 2023) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015-a). Yet, policy collaboration with Indigenous peoples continues to be structured and formed by colonial practices, such as top-down decision-making and one-sided communications, and is often “symbolic [not] substantive,” where collaboration is actually used “...as an instrument of authoritative control,” with the rare success story, such as the: “Upper Ottawa Valley Medical Recruitment Committee;” an intergovernmental committee created to reduce physician waitlists for several regions, municipalities and the Algonquin’s of Pikwakanagan First Nations (Lowrie-Dennis, 2017, p.1-13). Meaningful collaborations with Indigenous communities have been documented, such as creating unity, capacity and new opportunities for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities (Pinkerton, 2019); yet, there has not been enough documented success at the municipal level to alter the status quo. “Not surprisingly, a colonialized status quo is likely to persist without an inclusive policy paradigm that operates on the principle of mainstreaming [I]ndigeneity by [I]ndigenizing policymaking” (Maaka & Fleras, 2009, p.4).

Municipalities have a particular closeness to the Tribes/First Nations where they share/occupy the land and the urban Indigenous peoples that live and work within city/town limits. The federal and provincial governments have been called to create nation-to-nation building, but cannot attain this type of physical closeness to the Nations, whereas municipalities can (Department of Justice, 2017). Working with the Nations and Indigenous peoples impacted by policy changes can create additional conflicts and tension (Castro & Nielsen, 2001) while simultaneously fostering stronger relationships and collaboration (Peters, 2012). The City of New Westminster identified themes within their 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, where Reconciliation, Engagement and Inclusion were labelled as priorities, more on this background within the legislative activity heading below (Indigenous People and Reconciliation, 2023-c).

tawâw could create an opportunity for other municipalities to learn from. This research could inspire changes to practices within municipal settings that could benefit all employees while also impacting policies that currently continue to create harm for Indigenous peoples. Currently, there is a lack of research within the area of embedded Indigenous influence within the municipal setting. This research will provide a fraction of the gap that needs filling while also providing recommendations for other municipalities to learn from, and find ways to incorporate them.

Project Objectives, Scope and Research Questions

Introduction

The research questions, project objectives and scope are pulled from the intent and description of tawâw: that it is an Indigenous-aligned program that endeavours to unify staff to find a new way forward for Reconciliation efforts (Personal Communications, Christina Coolidge, October 5, 2023; Renouf, 2022-b). If it is to unify the staff, then the research wants to know what are the relationships and experiences of those staff members attending tawâw and what are the impacts of tawâw from their perspective?

Research Questions

Main Research question

What relationships and policies has tawâw impacted and how at the City of New Westminster?

Secondary research questions

1. Who has been influenced by tawâw?
2. Has tawâw influenced internal professional relationships for New Westminster's administration?
3. What are the political and structural reforms taking place, if any?
4. What are the key drivers behind these reforms?
5. Have other Western city administrations, similar in size to New Westminster, (BC, AB, SK, MB) conducted similar programs to tawâw?
6. How has tawâw strengthened reconciliation and decolonization goals?
7. How can programs similar to tawâw be adopted within other municipalities and what are the challenges they may encounter as they are rolled out?

Project Objectives

There are two main objectives for this research:

1. To analyze tawâw and its relationship and policy outcomes at the City of New Westminster; forming recommendations on how other municipalities can adopt Indigenous ways of knowing into policymaking.
2. To contextualize this analysis within the literature on the incorporation of Indigenous voices and Ways of Knowing into policymaking at the municipal level and specifically New Westminster.

Scope

This research describes a particular process within a set space and time and the author recognizes that the results may not be generalizable but may inform similar initiatives elsewhere. This research has a focus on the impacts of one Indigenous-aligned program in one particular municipality. Reconciliation more generally is beyond the scope of this project.

A unique problem is the researcher is from out of province and did not have the historical information on the land that New Westminster resides. The researcher continued to read about the history, people, and land (Fraser Basin Council, 2006; Musqueam Indian Band, 2025; Kwikwetlem First Nation 2025; Kwantlen First Nation, 2025; Squamish Nation, 2025; Tsleil-Waututh Nation, 2025). The researcher remained on a path of being open to learning, honest in their approach and empathetic to the land and people around them. The researcher is a settler and only had a year and half to build the relationships to complete their work. Research was limited to the client and what they wanted researched; the focus was not on the holistic reconciliation efforts of the City of New Westminster, but specifically on tawâw.

Background

The City of New Westminster began bolstering their efforts of Reconciliation in 2016, after the New Westminster Museum and Archives held an exhibition by Hayalhtkin'geme, Carey Newman, entitled: *The Witness Blanket* (Nakagawa et al., 2017, p.4). "Inspired by a woven blanket, this large-scale art installation is made out of hundreds of items reclaimed from Residential Schools, churches, government buildings, and traditional and cultural structures including Friendship Centres, band offices, treatment centres and universities, from across Canada" (Nakagawa, 2017, p.12). The exhibition moved the city and other community organizations to host an event: *Community Stories of Truth and Reconciliation* (Nakagawa et al., 2017, p.4).

"On January 19, 2017, over 250 people, including the New Westminster Mayor and a strong contingent of Councillors along with other dignitaries such as MLA Judy Darcy and Chief Rhonda Larrabee of the Qayqayt First Nation, attended Community Stories of Truth and Reconciliation at the Anvil Centre" (Nakagawa et al., 2017, p.4). Attendees of the event reported of its success. Nadine Nakagawa said: "We laughed, we cried, we talked about topics that are often felt to be too taboo to even acknowledge," (McManus, 2017).

The reported success of the event generated "recommendations for reconciliation" (Indigenous People and Reconciliation, 2023-c). The recommendations and UNDRIP were then "...endorsed by [C]ouncil..." in April of 2017 (Indigenous People and Reconciliation, 2023-c); two years prior to when B.C. enacted UNDRIP into law (Province of British Columbia, 2023). The recommendations for reconciliation that New Westminster's Council endorsed were as followed:

1. That the City of New Westminster makes a concrete and actionable commitment to the TRC 'Calls to Action', in particular those that apply to municipal government responsibilities as presented by Dr. Marie Wilson to the UBCM in 2015.
2. That the Mayor and Council request a report from staff regarding the noted above TRC 'Calls to Action' and how the City of New Westminster will operationalize actions that are undertaken.
3. That the City of New Westminster agrees to find ways to name and rename civic assets that would reflect reconciliation, acknowledge the unceded territory of the Qayqayt First Nations and Coast Salish people, and demonstrate diversity and inclusivity.
4. That the City of New Westminster support, through funding and other tangible resourcing, a community-led process of reconciliation that would include forums and dialogue, Indigenous led events and actions, and other creative and civic minded actions that demonstrate the spirit and principles of reconciliation (Nakagawa, 2017, p.10).

From 2018-2019 the City of New Westminster focused on local nation-to-nation relationship-building by meeting with the Nations in and surrounding New Westminster (Indigenous People and Reconciliation-c, 2023). They also: "researched the city's colonization history and its impacts on local nations" (Indigenous People and Reconciliation, 2023-c); this was primarily to understand what all has occurred between the Nations and the municipality in the past, so they can discover how to reconcile said past.

Reconciliation, Inclusion and Engagement became priorities in the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan and inspired the creation of tawâw in September, 2022, initially titled "Soup and Bannock" (Personal Communications, Christina Coolidge, January 8, 2024). On October 3, 2022, Council received *the Summary Report on Actions Taken by the City of New Westminster Involving Indigenous Peoples: 1860-1999* (City of New Westminster-c, 2023); providing a full review of the injustices made to Indigenous

peoples specifically by the City of New Westminster. Inspired by this report, and the continued efforts by the “the Reconciliation Working Group [see Appendix B for more information]” (City of New Westminster-c, 2023, p.4), on that same day, in a report from the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer it stated:

...further next steps for the Reconciliation work plan include the continued evolution of the Elder in Residence Program that began in September 2022 whereby an Indigenous Elder joins us at City Hall every Wednesday. He is available for meetings, conversations, and relationship-building for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff. Soup and Bannock is also provided for lunch which encourages staff to participate in a safe and casual atmosphere where they are free to be themselves. The Elder is also available to support Indigenous staff who sometimes feel isolated working within Western institutions (City of New Westminster-c, 2023, p.3).

In 2023, after six months of tawâw, the city proclaimed March 2023-March 2024, a “Year of Truth” (A Year of Truth, 2023). The Year of Truth focused on exposing the truth to all residents of New Westminster: “As a city and community, we need to understand the mistakes of our past in order to make meaningful reconciliation” (A Year of Truth, 2023), see more in Appendix C. In 2023, the city published *Truth Before Reconciliation: Our Journey*, a document to outline more of the work that has been done during their Year of Truth, which concluded in early 2024 (City of New Westminster, 2023-a).

In the 2023 Annual Report, and within the Strategic Priorities under the Indigenous Relations heading, two important notes were found. One was about the Year of Truth:

Declared March 2023 to March 2024 as A Year of Truth, demonstrating the city’s commitment to truth-seeking and truth-telling about its colonial history. In conjunction, a Year of Truth website was launched (yearoftruth.ca), banners were installed across the city, and a journal titled Truth Before Reconciliation: Our Journey was released, providing a comprehensive look at the city’s Indigenous relations activities up to 2023 and an acknowledgement of the harms caused by the city in both the near and distant past (City of New Westminster-b, 2023, p.69).

While the other was about tawâw:

...weekly soup and Bannock lunchtime gatherings (now called “tawâw”), and regular Reconciliation Working Group meetings to enable City staff and leadership to continue learning about Indigenous culture, values, and history, so as to improve reconciliation and Indigenous engagement efforts (City of New Westminster-b, 2023, p.69).

Demonstrating without doubt that the city was running tawâw and it was a strategic initiative out of the Indigenous Relations Office.

As the Year of Truth came to a close the most recent legislative activity, since the writing of this paper, occurred on June 24, 2024, when Council proclaimed June 30, as Indigenous Survivors Day.

Media Coverage

Media coverage on tawâw until end of 2024 was limited and local to the area. The first article introduces Christina Coolidge and her work in September 2022. It is the first mention of Soup and Bannock to the

public. Christina Coolidge is quoted stating: “We just started an Elder-in-Residence program...we have an elder coming into the ity once a week... we have [S]oup and [B]annock available for all the staff to come and sit down and have it” (Renouf, 2022-a).

In December 2022, a second article appears, where Soup and Bannock is centre stage. Here, Elder William is quoted: “The [S]oup and [B]annock, it has dissolved all these walls. It has given [the staff] the opportunity to see each other. In all our Indigenous societies, food has been an important factor in anything that has to be done because the food not only nourishes the body. It warms the heart” (Renouf, 2022-b).

In July 2023, the media informed the public of a contest City Hall was running where winners from the public could attend tawâw (Renouf, 2023). It was the first time tawâw was used as an engagement tactic. Media coverage slows afterwards with a few reports coming from the city, where they mention tawâw without a formal announcement on its name change, nor its significance (City of New Westminster, 2023-b) The following year tawâw was mentioned in the media as the city once again used tawâw as an engagement tactic. For the opening of the t̄m̄əsew̄tx̄ Aquatic and Community Centre (McManus, 2024). Christina Coolidge notes that “these engagements continue to grow” (Personal Communications, May 24, 2024). No additional articles were published on tawâw beyond July 2023 as of the writing of this paper.

Positionality Statement

Kovach asks: “What is your purpose for this research? Why and how does this research give back to the community? How did you arrive at this research curiosity? What is your story? What is your connection to your culture” (2021, p.140)? I endeavour to answer these questions below.

As a white woman of majority Ukrainian, Hungarian, and Scottish descent, I do not have the lived experience of an Indigenous person, which my research directly impacts. I am guided by the hope of making the world a safer place for my daughters, one of which is Blackfoot, Blood Tribe (Kainai). My husband is also Blackfoot of the Blood Tribe. I see how policies have negatively impacted my family’s Nation, confederacy, land etc. The list is endless, and the imbalance is clear. I hope my work has a direct impact on the considerations municipalities make when hiring public administration staff or developing programs and policies that impact Indigenous peoples.

Authentic intention is important to me as a researcher and to reduce harm to my research participants, but particularly my Indigenous participants. I also recognize the dichotomy of conducting research as a fourth-generation settler on a governing body about relationships and Indigenizing the policymaking processes. *As George states:*

To some, Indigenizing the [colonial structure] re-affirms the social hierarchy within neo-colonial settler societies and is seen as another attempt to impose control mechanisms on Indigenous peoples which in turn negatively impact the future growth and development of Indigenous peoples and maintain the illegal dispossession of Indigenous lands and waterways. More of the same old paternalism, but with a multicultural, neo-liberal spin” (George, 2019, p.73).

I must recognize that this work is about decolonizing spaces and processes, but the space and current processes still live in a colonial structure. A structure I benefit from as a white person. Now that I have been invited into this Indigenous space to conduct this beneficial research: I understand that I will work to learn the benefits of this research with the hopes of sharing it while understanding I must never speak for Indigenous peoples. I am here to listen and convey my learnings to other non-Indigenous people with

the hopes to be a bridge but not block the way for Indigenous peoples to hold their spaces, places and teachings.

Thematic Literature Review

For the purposes of this study, the majority of the literature review occurred prior to the data collection. This provided some foundational and contextual information before research trips to tawâw began. This particular literature review aided with orientating the study, while acknowledging that it is only preliminary due to the nature of grounded theory work. The research does include a document analysis to review the impacts of potential Indigenizing of policymaking at the municipal level, therefore; this literature review is thematic based, covering: Indigenous Ways of Knowing with Municipalities, Indigenous tokenism in policymaking, and Indigenizing policymaking.

Search string for literature review can be found in Appendix F.

Introduction

As this research pertains to the incorporation of Indigenous Ways of Knowing into a Municipality and potential policy impacts, it is valuable to see current literature on the work that has been done to review other research related to the topic of Indigenous Knowledge within colonial spaces and Indigenous Policy.

Indigenous Ways of Knowing with Municipalities

Incorporating Indigenous Ways of Knowing into colonial spaces can reduce negative impacts on Indigenous people; demonstrated in the field of health, where cultural consideration improved health outcomes (Brascoupé & Waters, 2009, p.7); and, in prisons on the “Work 2 Give” program which “positively affected the men’s identities and provided opportunities for communities to help incarcerated men to heal” (Varcoe, 2020, p.1). Incorporating Indigenous Ways of Knowing is not only proven to be effective in reducing inequities but is within *The Principles of Reconciliation* from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada-b, 2015, p.3-4).

Rarely have governments at the federal and provincial level incorporated Indigenous Ways of Knowing from the outset, with a genuine integration throughout development; more often Indigenous input has been symbolic or solicited as an afterthought, if at all (Heritz, 2018; Papillon & Rodon, 2020; Canada, 2022; Sanderson, 2019; Forrester, 2023; Grattan, 2023). Boldt & Long differentiated between “statehood and territoriality” and the value in making participation localized to ones’ community: explaining that there is strength in localized community participation (Boldt & Long, 1984). Citizen participation continues to be a request by local government of its residents, particularly for consultation, committees and running elections (Graham, 2015), and this civic participation is generally unpaid. Public Administration often looks for citizen participation to incorporate a myriad of voices, but as the case study conducted by Carley et al., reveals: there’s still concerns that citizen participation is mostly from small groups of activists with the privilege of time to attend lengthy meetings (2000, p.15). If that is the case, then those without the privilege of time do not have their voices heard. “...Indigenous peoples remain underrepresented in municipal government;” if representation matters then Public Administration has to create representation (Heritz, 2018, p.596).

“The local response to urban Indigenous input has emerged over the past ten years in the form of Aboriginal advisory boards in some municipalities” as well as Indigenous Relations Offices (Heritz, 2018, p.597). Embedded employees within municipalities with multicultural mandates are relatively new inside of Public Administration, with Indigenous Relations Offices established since 2014; “Examples of such can be found in Edmonton, Hamilton, Vancouver, Winnipeg, and soon Calgary” (Marger, 2017, p.36). Studies are rare on the impacts of Indigenous Relations Offices and their employees, this research only discovered one, which was provincially based and focused on resource management (Campbell, 2019), and interestingly interviews were conducted with “Indigenous Relations Specialists” who, based on responses, came from majority settler descent, but Campbell’s research was of benefit due to the questions of “Community Practice” within the context of Indigenous Relations. Marger, alternatively, had an interview participant of Indigenous ancestry who spoke of the benefits and drawbacks of being Indigenous within municipal settings being: the advocacy available, the representation required and the pressures of a colonial system as an employer (Justin Wiebe, Michif Métis Planner, 2017, pers. comm. July 24 as cited by Mager, 2017, p.40-41). The research suggests there is a call and need for representation at the municipal level for Indigenous people, but the impacts of embedded staff have rarely been reviewed.

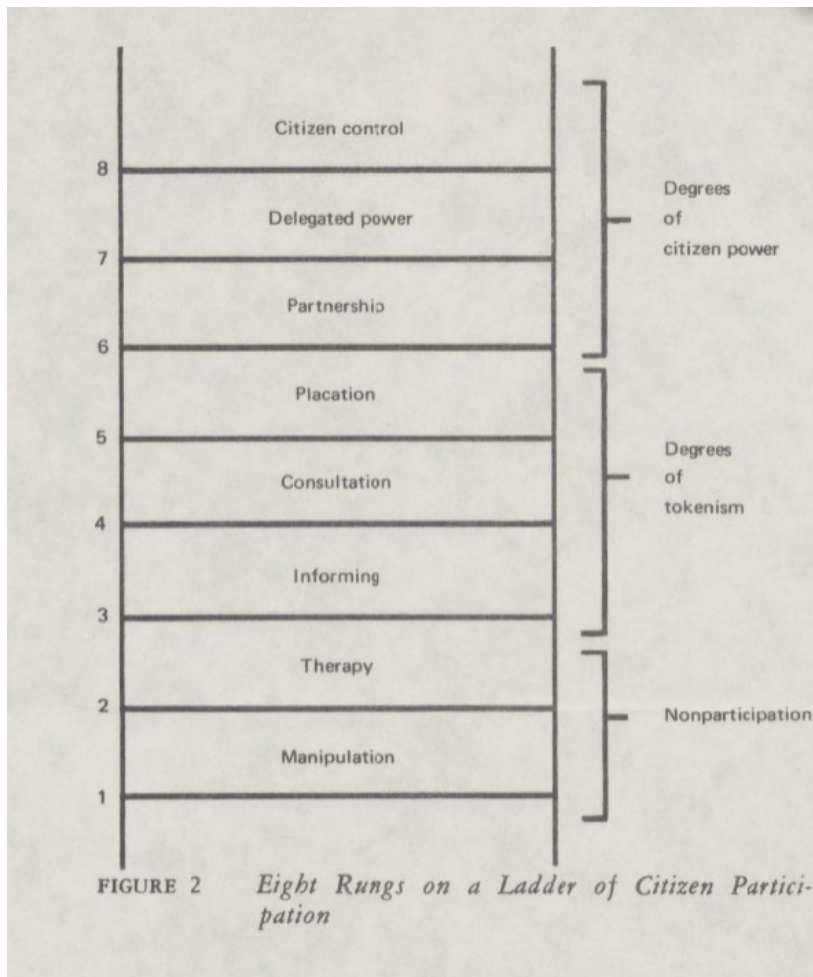
Indigenous Tokenism in Policymaking

There is a long history of advocating from Indigenous people to be properly engaged and consulted with on matters concerning their people and their lands (Galois, 1992; Harris, 2012). Speeches, letters and trips to Ottawa have been happening by Natives for well over 100 years and continues to today (Cairns, 1966; Borovoy, 1973; Galois, 1992; Harris, 2012; Barker, 2015) in hopes of seeing systemic and policy changes for their people.

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau espoused on “participatory democracy;” a form of citizen participation within policymaking (Lyon, 1974). A notion the Prime Minister spoke of before, during and after his consultations with Indigenous leaders leading up to the *White Paper* (Lyon, 1974). Unfortunately, the form of participation that took place between Trudeau’s government and Indigenous leaders, could only be described as tokenism, as far as Arnstein’s *ladder of citizen participation* is concerned [see Figure 5 below] (Arnstein, 1969), because there was “...strong [Native] opposition...” to the *White Paper* once released; revealing that Trudeau may have met with Indigenous people but didn’t actually listen to them (Lyon, 1974, p.230). Black & McBean note, “It can be argued that the majority of Indigenous engagement to date has been tokenistic in nature....on a ladder of citizen participation where consultation is viewed as a degree of tokenism, as it is argued that consultation provides no real assurance that concerns or ideas will be taken into account” (Black & McBean, 2017, p.713). Kalyta (2022) also made this connection between Arnstein’s ladder and Indigenous peoples; by explaining the various rungs of the ladder and adapting it for Indigenous people. Of particular note within the 3 rungs of tokenism, Kalyta replaced consultation with dialogue, but never explains why the change in word choice from Arnstein (2022, p.12-14). Nevertheless, when looking at both Black & McBean (2017) with the work from Kalyta (2022) it is an appropriate change given the negative context consultation has from Black & McBean; however, the term consultation is still used often in society today in places such as the “duty to consult” (Newman, 2009). Arnstein’s work lends itself to the topic of Indigenous policy because the question goes back to power; who actually has it and how much decision-making influence do governments allot to Indigenous people within the policymaking process? The majority of governments may provide a token seat at the policymaking table, but one seat holds little power without mass influence on decision-making.

Figure 5

Arnstein's Ladder, 1969, p.2



Due to the Aboriginal rights provision in the *Constitution Act* of 1982 and the cases in 2004 and 2005 on the “duty to consult” when “the Supreme Court released a trilogy of decisions consisting of *Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forests)* (*Haida Nation*); *Taku River Tlingit First Nation v. British Columbia (Project Assessment Director)*;¹¹ and *Mikisew Cree First Nation v. Canada (Minister of Canadian Heritage)*” (Library of Parliament, 2019) [more on this in [Appendix C](#)], there is now an expectation upon governments to consult with Indigenous people on matters that which concern them (Newman, 2009). Following these events, are the realities that there’s still a disparity in the power status between Indigenous people and other Canadians. A right to consultation is not and has not been enough, but appeases the tokenism seen in consultation practices of governments within the “duty to consult” (Newman, 2009).

Indigenizing Policymaking

Maaka & Fleras champion UNDRIP and talk about “...participatory policymaking principles of free prior and informed consent in all policy matters of concern to [I]ndigenous communities” but want to see things taken a step further (2009, p.5); with bottom-up solutions of working alongside Nations through

collaborative/participatory policymaking frameworks (The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as cited by Maaka & Fleras, 2009). Maaka & Fleras call for the Indigenizing of policymaking (2009) and recommend using a framework similar to the Gender Based Analysis (GBA) they call Indigenous Based Analysis (IGA); where every level of the policymaking process is viewed with an Indigenous lens (2009). Maaka & Fleras make high-level recommendations on how to achieve an IGA without actually creating the steps to their framework within their work (Fleras & Maaka, 2010). That said, their recommendations are thought-provoking enough for governments to consider for discussion: “emphasizes negotiation over litigation, engagement over entitlement, relationships over rights, interdependence over opposition, co-operation over competition, reconciliation over restitution, and power-sharing over power conflict” (Fleras & Maaka, 2010). Their framework offers perspective that is beyond tokenism and may be an interesting framework to draw upon for this research, but Fleras & Maaka’s work is general and not specified for municipalities. Harris explores Fleras & Maaka’s IGA and notes that their framework is about “...consultation and accommodation...” and that “[t]he IGA framework as a policy model is created to offset systemic information-processing biases by ensuring that Indigenous people become a part of creation and interpretation of policymaking” (Harris, 2015, p.20-50). Bringing Indigenous people into the process from the outset and a part of every step within the process. Similarly, “[Walker, Moore and Linklater] suggest that urban Aboriginal policy needs to be co-produced with Aboriginal community leaders and experts” (Peters, 2012, p.4). Peters’ work is focused more on urban Indigenous people as a monolith rather than the individual Nations and territories, but circles back to participation in policymaking at the municipal level.

Participatory democracy was used as a “vague commitment” to make citizens feel empowered without giving citizens actual decision-making power, as shared by Lyon in their review of Canadian party systems and citizen participation: “By exploiting the rhetoric of participation, party leaders raised expectations and scepticisms which had then to be met by a program which would convince observers that there was more to the politics of participation than mere words...it was simply a vague commitment to raise levels of political involvement...” (Lyon, 1974, p.226). Lyon continues: “[They] could afford to issue a general invitation to participate because they protected its leader’s control over the system by retaining decision-making power in the hands of the cabinet” (Lyon, 1974, p.377). Lyon synthesized that politicians used participation to gain “party endorsement” rather than a genuine motivation to collaborate on policy with voters (Lyon, 1974, p.451-452).

Whereas Boldt & Long acknowledge that Indigenous people already practiced a true form of participatory democracy, but did so within community (1984). Conversely to Arnstein’s ladder, any roles of leadership amongst tribes/Nations pre-colonialism were seen as a sacrificial role and not a form of power to steer a collective; leaders were still part of the collective which all had decision-making authority (Long, 1990). This is important to note when looking at the infusion of Indigenous Ways of Knowing into policymaking. Participatory democracy has flaws, but has benefits within the tiered government system we have today and the Chief and Council system imposed on Nations through the *Indian Act*, which historically was another form of assimilation (Long, 1993). Bear (2000) explains further how participation is a part of the Indigenous Worldview; participation is not just about democracy but a part of their values and customs. This level of connection to participation is cultural and has a level of significance and respect that the present form of colonial governance lacks. If policymaking is to be Indigenized it must come with this sense of significance and respect, or else it is sure to fail.

Researchers also promote the “two-eyed seeing” approach, “...learning to see from one eye with the strengths of [Indigenous Knowledges] and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of mainstream knowledges and ways of knowing, and to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all” (Bartlett et al., 2012; Reid et al., 2020 as cited by Sha et al., 2021) in policymaking and collaboration with Indigenous people (Bartlett et al., 2012; Giles et al., 2016; Reid et al., 2020; Sha, 2021). However, the literature has no case studies clearly documenting an application of “two-eyed seeing” to policy development by municipal governments with Indigenous communities. Rather, they’re often only reported successfully if the Nation in collaboration has a fairer power-balance with the government officials they’re working on the project with, such as equal decision-making power on conservation rights or guardianship programs (Sha, 2021, p.24). Even with those instances, two-eyed seeing has yet to influence the policymaking process. If there is to be a successful Indigenizing of policymaking the power imbalance must be rectified with Indigenous people. Equal decision-making power and influence must be incorporated for success. Interestingly, the City of New Westminster has incorporated two-eyed seeing into their work leading up to the Year of Truth (City of New Westminster, 2023-a, p.21). This has yet to be fully researched or documented.

Conclusion of Thematic Literature Review

There are some positive directions in the work municipalities are doing to collaborate with Indigenous peoples, groups and Nations. As Alcantara & Nelles (2016) note, “[w]hile national and provincial media publications are filled with stories of conflict, contention, and demands, many Indigenous and local governments are quietly engaging in what seem to be highly productive and beneficial intergovernmental partnerships” (p.4) through collaborations. Furthermore, “...local and Indigenous governments across jurisdictions recognize or at least assume there is value in coordinating and communicating with each other to address local and shared priorities and concerns” (Walker, Moore, and Linklater 2011; as cited by Alcantara & Nelles, 2016). Some have argued that local and Nation relationships are still symbolic in nature (Fawcett et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2011), and the literature is shallow within the municipal context. Additionally, research on Indigenous Relations Offices have been near non-existent within the local context. It can be concluded that there is an increased opportunity for municipalities to work with Indigenous peoples and to learn how to do it well, in hopes to inform policymaking that will impact their communities.

Methodology, Conceptual framework and Methods

Methodology

The researcher adopted a qualitative approach to this research as it was best suited for the concepts of the research. As this research endeavours to understand both Indigenous Ways of Knowing and a colonial system: the design of this research must incorporate both within the methodology. The approach of taking the strengths from Indigenous methodology as well as mainstream [Western] methodology, is inspired by two-eyed seeing (Bartlett et al., 2012; Reid et al., 2020 as cited by Reid et al., 2020). This is not to say that Indigenous researchers do not use Western methodologies, and that Non-Indigenous Researchers do not use Indigenous methodologies, rather, the researcher endeavours to ensure both are incorporated into this research and flow seamlessly.

Methodical approach

The methodological approach for this research is within Indigenous epistemologies, ontologies, and paradigm which are influenced by a relationship built between the researcher and clients: an Indigenous research framework that is developed as time goes on. "Maori researcher Russell Bishop (1999), [who] introduces the notion of 'collaborative storying' (p. 6) which positions the researcher as a participant. As both parties become engaged in a collaborative process, the relationship builds and deepens as stories are shared" (Kovach, 2010, p.43). This approach aids to utilize one of the eyes within the two-eyed seeing. This requires full participation by the researcher to immerse in tawāw with Christina Coolidge and Elder William; in an open collaborative relationship that builds on stories and develops their relationship.

Ethics

This project required an ethics review by the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board as it requires a careful approach when researching humans and Indigenous people and knowledges. The researcher took this very seriously and sought guidance from both supervisors and Indigenous clients during this process. Considerations specific to Indigenous research and how they were approached, including:

1. Cultural sensitivity and respect - understanding when to watch and listen versus when to ask questions will be key to learning protocols and traditions of the Indigenous clients. Seeking guidance from other participants will also be valuable rather than putting the burden on the Indigenous clients for this knowledge (First Nations Information Governance Centre, 2014; Wilson, 2008).
2. Relational Accountability - The researcher must build relationships not only with the clients but with the lands, ancestors and broader community. The researcher will endeavour to build those relationships and understandings (Wilson, 2008).
3. Community ownership and accountability - to ensure community ownership and accountability the clients will be consulted throughout the process. Verifying the ethics, approaches, and final sign-off on the project prior to defense.
4. Informed consent - the researcher is committed to informing Indigenous participants and clients of the impacts of this research. This will be an ongoing process that will not rely solely on consent forms.

5. Avoidance of harm - The researcher will reflect on the potential harms throughout the process of the research and consider any potential harms both at the participant level as well as community level and wishes none of this research to inflate perpetuating stereotypes from colonial systems.
6. Reciprocity - reciprocity was incorporated through knowledge sharing of the process and findings with the Indigenous Relations Advisor.

Approval was received on April 7, 2024, with ID number: 24-0004.

Qualitative Approaches

The researcher endeavoured to understand the impacts of tawâw, both on municipal employees within New Westminster and on their policies. A focus on grounded-theory and case study methodologies allowed for exploration of a new program, tawâw, and the development of new concepts outside of what has been found thus far within Indigenous inclusion in policymaking at the municipal level. For grounded-theory, “[r]esearchers work inductively to generate theories strictly from the data” (O’Leary, 2004, p.134). Yin, states that a case study methodology can be the right choice for research when “...your questions seek to explain some present circumstance...[how or why] some social phenomenon works...” and “...the more that your questions require an extensive and [in-depth] description of some social phenomenon” (2009, p.4). Yin also states “...the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events...” (2009, p.4). These methodologies provided an authenticity to the research by allowing the participants space to provide their experiences and direct what portion of policy changes should be researched. Participant observation also took place to capture details of the social phenomenon that is tawâw.

Using both exploratory case study and grounded theory allows for a complementary approach. The exploratory case study provides a broad and in-depth understanding of the context and processes at work, while grounded theory facilitates the development of new theoretical insights based on the data. Together, these methodologies allow one to explore new territory (tawâw in municipal policymaking) and develop theoretical contributions grounded in the data.

Indigenous methodologies

Indigenous methodologies are defined as unique ways of using Indigenous positionality and perspective to conduct research within Indigenous communities (Windchief et al., 2017). This research is conducted in a colonial structure, one of government, and therefore does not initially appear to be an Indigenous community, however; the leader of this work is an Indigenous client. The client has created, what appears to be, a decolonizing community, one of which she has built within a colonial structure. An Indigenous methodology would be most appropriate as a result of this knowledge. Indigenous methodologies are aligned with an Indigenous paradigm, emphasizing transformative learning and decolonization (Held, 2019). “As Cameron et al. (2014) stated, ‘For non-Indigenous researchers, an Indigenous methodology allows the researcher to enter into the world alongside Indigenous experience rather than framing the Indigenous worldview from a distance’” (p.E5; as cited by Dawson et. al, 2017, p.13). This is the focal point of this research: authentic participation. Observation is the Western side of the two-eyed seeing while genuine participation is the Indigenous eye. “Indigenous methodologies require participant-level engagement and prioritize the autonomy and inherent wisdom of research participants (Kovach, 2010; Sheehan, 2011; as cited by Ibrahima & Kelly).

As the researcher is taking an Indigenous approach to their research, but is a white-woman, it is of value to review the positionality of the researcher, which is further explored within the [positionality](#) section of this project. Taking an Indigenous approach must be done with the intention to reduce harm to Indigenous participants, more on this in the [ethics](#) section of this project.

Methods

To align with the two-eyed seeing methodology the researcher collected data with both an Indigenous and Western approach. It must be reiterated that these methods are not mutually-exclusive and must weave together seamlessly in order to approach the research in a two-eyed seeing manner.

Indigenous methods

The researcher kept a journal of learnings from the discussions with the Indigenous leaders of tawâw, but did not record most conversations with the client in respect of protocols. Most meetings occurred ahead or after tawâw. They were unplanned and unscripted to maintain an authenticity to the relationship.

Outside of the relational piece and journaling that is mentioned in the methodological portion of this project, the researcher attended tawâw four times to collect data in-person. The researcher attended tawâw to experience it as a participant and recorded the experiences with technological devices, such as two laptops and a DSLR camera. Once the first three sessions were complete the client and researcher asked for volunteers to engage in additional data collection, at table-top discussions. The researcher adopted the dialogic method for this additional data collection: Kovach's conversational method, which:

...originated from storytelling and ...is found within Western research [but] ...differs ...in several ways: a connection to Indigenous knowledge, a location within an Indigenous paradigm, a relational nature, a purpose (which is often decolonizing), following a specific protocol that reflects the Indigenous knowledge, a flexible nature, collaboration, and reflexivity (Kovach, 2010; as cited by Dawson et. al, 2017, p.4).

The conversational method was used in the table-top discussions with participants [known as Group 2] were prompted with five questions aimed to answer the primary research question: What relationships and policies has tawâw impacted and how at the City of New Westminster? The questions were:

1. What has your experience been like at tawâw?
2. What impacts have you seen as a result of attending tawâw, either yourself or someone else?
3. Has tawâw had a direct impact on policymaking?
4. What does tawâw mean to you?
5. What is your most memorable experience that you've had at tawâw?

Two sessions were recorded and digitally transcribed, to aid with notetaking, while the first recording did not function and was replaced with notes that were initially hand-written and then typed after the session. A fourth tabletop was not needed as participation numbers were completed by session 3.

Mainstream/Western methods

Other qualitative approaches for this research are the collection of data within the case study and observational notetaking. Following each attendance of the 3 table-top discussions, additional data collection was offered to participants for Group 3. A qualitative approach, encompassing semi-structured interviews with the municipal employees who have attended or been impacted by the creation of tawâw. The interview questions covered these topics:

1. the creation and structure of tawâw;
2. takeaways from the program;
3. impacts on relationships in the workplace;
4. impacts on the work they're doing now;
5. impacts on policies that they've witnessed;
6. who the actors were in those policy changes.

The interviews of Group 3 focused on questions around experience, content/structure, delivery/facilitation, impacts/outcomes, suggestions, and policy. For full list of interview questions see Appendix H. The interviews were one-on-one and conducted in-person or over digital meetings. These interviews were recorded and then digitally transcribed for note-taking purposes. Once complete, any actors named in making policy changes were also offered semi-structured interviews; regardless of their attendance to tawâw. Questions in these interviews covered: what policies have been changed recently, why were they changed, who worked on them, who wanted them changed but didn't work on them and why.

Participant groups

To approach this work with two-eyed seeing there needed to be 4 groups of participants. Participants from all groups received a name tag with a random letter or random letter with a number combination for data collection purposes. Participants did not provide any identifiable information with the exclusion of Christina Coolidge and Elder William and two individuals who willingly identified as Indigenous. An additional identifiable attribute were department names, which was never explicitly asked. Only observed or noted if the information was offered. This is permitted within the ethics application and the consent forms that were signed by participants. Participants ranged from outdoor Parks workers and police to communications professionals and members of Council; making tawâw a cross-departmental program open to all City Staff.

Group 1 – observational data

Group 1 Participants signed consent forms agreeing to observational data collection and any photos or videos that may be taken during the session. Participants were encouraged to conduct themselves as they normally would during tawâw. The researcher was integrated within tawâw; as Indigenous methodologies encourages full participation. The researcher would get asked questions, enjoy the soup and Bannock and engage when they were called upon to do so.

Group 1 consisted of observational data of 66 unique participants during four sessions of tawâw. If a participant attended more than 1 session they were still only counted once.

Sessions occurred over the lunch period on Wednesdays beginning around 11:30 AM PST and ending around 1:30 PM PST.

Dates of the four sessions observed:

1. April 17, 2024;
2. May 1, 2024;
3. May 22, 2024; and
4. September 11, 2024.

Session 1 served Indian Tacos in a buffet style where you could build your own taco atop a piece of Bannock, the black beans Christina brought were a particular hit, while Sessions 2 & 3 served soup and Bannock. Session 4 was a “build your own cup of soup” with cups of ramen and toppings served with choice of Bannock. The Bannock comes with a choice of savoury or sweet, flavours such as, various berry flavours, cinnamon, rosemary and more. Soups are predominantly vegan, as the participants are told to make vegan soups, at times non-vegan toppings are offered.

Group 2 – table-top discussions

Table-top discussions were offered for those in Group 1 and invitations were extended to others if there were not enough participants; at which time, the client, Christina Coolidge, would contact additional participants for table-tops if they had already been to tawâw in the past. All participants required for this study filled by 3 sessions.

Group 2 sessions occurred on:

1. Session 1 - April 18, 2024;
2. Session 2 - May 2, 2024;
3. Session 3 - May 24, 2024.

Total number of participants for Group 2 was 15.

Group 3 – semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were offered to people who brought up any type of policy or strategic document during tawâw and table-top discussions. They were also offered to people who were recommended by table-top participants, particularly if they were a part of policy or strategic changes.

Group 3 did not necessarily partake in sessions as they were one-on-one interviews, conducted in-person or in a digital meeting.

Total number of participants for Group 3 was 11.

Group 4 – Elder and Indigenous Relations Advisor

Group 4 was made up of Elder William and Christina Coolidge. Any discussions or impromptu one-on-ones were journaled and documented with themes counted within the data.

Summary of participants

Sixty-eight people participated in sessions of tawâw during the four research visits. This would include all of Group 1 plus Christina Coolidge and Elder William. Data collection occurred between April 2024-

September 2024 for Group 1, with many participants attending more than one session. The majority of table-top, Group 2, participants were sourced from the attendance of the 4 sessions of tawâw with the exclusion of five participants who had previously attended and were mentioned by other participants. The majority of interviews, Group 3, were sourced from table-top discussions participants or recommendations by table-top attendees, seven of these participants had also attended the Group 1 sessions, however; were not initially sourced from that Group, making the total number of unique participants of this study 74.

Table-top sessions, Group 2, involved 15 participants from three different sessions and the interview sessions, Group 3, had 11 participants, with two participants coming from table-top sessions, due to their mentioning of specific policies that required follow-up discussion. All quotes for these two individuals were separated between their table-top experience and interview experience to ensure no duplicate information was counted within the themes. This is to ensure all data is only collected by the correct group and no duplication could occur. Group 3 also had 2 attendees who did not attend Group 1, nor 2. A clear breakdown can be seen below in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Group numbers and amount of participants

Group #	Participants	Unique attendees
1	66	66
2	15	2
3	11	4
4	2	2
Total	94	74

Data collection was multi-layered for this research. Conducting observational data [Group 1], table-top discussions [Group 2], interviews [Group 3], and journal entries from participation and relationship building [Group 4]. This layering was critical to maintaining a two-eyed seeing approach, although it pushed the researcher months passed the initial data collection timeline goal of three months into five months.

Data Analysis and Approach

Following the conversations, interviews, participations and observations, a thematic data analysis of themes and trends were identified from the observations, journals, recordings and transcriptions. "This involves systematic drilling into the raw data in order to build up categories of understanding. [Reducing] data and sort[ing] it into various themes" (O'Leary, 2004, p.352). Data was first pulled into a Microsoft Excel document one participant at a time and then sorted based on commonalities which led to the discovery of themes, see sample in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Excel document sample to preview how themes were initially categorized

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
	ST																								
Absence of hierarchy, elder	"Initially, it felt like an invitation from Christina to, have the experience of being in Elder Williams' presence, and it felt like her meeting of her event and it was structured	"It's just nice to be able to talk to people as humans in that place, and it's surprising for that. "### For people just to meet and talk to each other in a way that's a little more, little less rigid and breaks a little bit of the hierarchy that exists in City Hall and the ward	"The structure is everybody is welcome. The structure is there is no judgement. The structure is that we are here to nurture each other. The structure is compassion. The structure is... ###	"There's probably a bit of learning that's been taken back from tawaw and how it sort of not a hierarchical position of the City in one																					
Sense of community	"As staff, we've shared meals together before, but it hasn't been, it hasn't felt so community oriented like it does at tawaw." ###	"When I'm in City Hall, I try to make it to be a nice break in the middle of the day. I get to, of course, have some food for lunch, which is often a meal skip anyway just because I'm busy doing other things, but it also gives me a chance to just talk to different people	"I trained out as a little nugget and then blossomed. "##### with Elder Williams' enormous compassion and enormous capacity for love and forgiveness	G2: Just kind of organically grew into this like almost like we're at the bar having a beer instead of at an official city function. G2: "k																					
Storytelling (moved to participatory action)	"My experience early on was that you know there were typically an announcement of a story or some kind of sharing." (this on two themes)																								
Participatory action research	"I don't feel like tawaw is a place where there's explicit teaching, and yet there's the experience of learning. So I think that as a result of this program, is my commitment to understanding the truth and history and the role of	Tome, the objective [of tawaw] is for people to talk to each other to meet each other, to understand what other people in this city are dealing with every day to be human with your coworker, and to introduce, maybe subtly to folks who are living in this very colonial municipal construct to introduce them to a different	"They to achieve this [Indigenous Knowledge] through things and also through sort of wanting to share that knowledge with us. They don't just come in and do it. They explain what they're doing... There's	S: we've called Indigenous folks Stakeholders for a long time even a year ago not actually recognizing that they're rights-holders.																					
Free Will (all of free will was absorbed into sense of community).	"And I think if we start placing an expectation on people to be there that changes time, it changes the intention and the the sentiment of it." ### "So there's there's similar sentiments, but I don't think this could translate to there like I hate	"And so all of that like, yeah, there's a weird thing about making it mandatory because it's awesome, like, um, I don't want to force anybody to go to that. "### "They're OK to take an hour off at lunch, take their hour at lunch and go and actually have soup and meet some folks, right?"																							
Policy		"I went down actually down [to the works yard] and chatted with him because I recognized somebody there [from tawaw]. Who talked to us for awhile, so I was comfortable to go down there and just say, hey, how are things going down here, what you guys up to, and they were doing this [work] and got to have a bit of an interaction in their work setting that I probably wouldn't have had, probably wouldn't have gone down and just inserted myself into that and had the sort of that two minute conversation with some folks who are doing that work. And that actually brought up conversations around	[Preventing crisis comm pilot she says] "a document [just read out of an inbox that had a lot of... just the lens was different. It had such a strong Indigenous lens that it made me think to myself did it spring from [tawaw]?" When referencing the crisis comm pilot "very compassionate language and not condescending or tokenary. It felt very real"	S: I think that extended to some of our actual policy work. I'm just thinking about last year. We started crisis response pilot recently and that's actually recognizing that many of the folks we're supporting community member, you know, had intergenerational trauma. And it's actually the work	G2: I'd put it more as empathy and compassion. We've sort of taken what we've learned from meeting Christina and what we've learned from tawaw and now we go out on the street and we're meeting these people in crisis we can build on that amazing, his stories, his, the difficulties that he's had in life we were doing that but now																				

Once themes were sorted within the excel document they were moved to a digital board, also known as a Miro board, to visually sort themes using virtual sticky-notes and other design tools that are provided within Miro's web platform.

Additional document analysis and research followed the thematic data analysis, beginning with a document scan and followed by a policy analysis. The document scan and policy analysis were dependent on which policies the interviewees identified as being impacted by their attendance to tawaw. The researcher also included a review to see if other Western city administrations (BC, AB, SK, MB) have conducted similar programs to tawaw via media analysis.

Data was initially collected into a spreadsheet as themes emerged. Initial theming was based on direct language connections that were said, written and recorded, such as, if someone said: "sharing stories" then that would go into a category of storytelling, the word was a direct connection. Following initial theming, data was reviewed multiple times a week for three months, a step further was revisiting videos, transcripts, observational data and journal notes to find contextual connections, such as, if a participant tells a story that someone else told them that would also be placed in storytelling, even if the participant did not use the words: story, stories or storytelling.

Once themes were fully realized, they were moved to the digital board in Miro. The themes were then clustered in various forms to find larger relationships (Connelly 2014; Patton 2002; as cited by Theissen, 2016). The data was then "structured according to themes and then into conceptual categories" (Cherubini et. al, 2010, p.548).

Document Analysis

Secondary data was sought for additional support for the claims made by participants. The document analysis was conducted on any relevant documents or policy documents. The documents were discovered through searching escribe for New Westminster, New Westminster's relevant web platforms and Google.

Findings

Introduction

tawâw is an Indigenous-aligned program that was created in September 2022 at the City of New Westminster by the Indigenous Relations Advisor, Christina Coolidge. Research Participant A4 described tawâw by saying:

It's every Wednesday and people bring different soup and Bannock is cooked. The idea there is Elder William and Christina are there and staff come and it's about casual conversation. Sometimes, like last meeting, we did a presentation on the Crisis Response Pilot Project and one of the things that came out there is we're looking at an engagement, cause there has to be an evaluation component. But, could we do an engagement over soup and Bannock? Bring it out to the community? That was what Elder William said. It is an opportunity sometimes with just discussion, learning, sometimes it's more directed.

When combining all data from Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4, a total of 11 themes were found, with some having subthemes:

1. Hugs
2. Resiliency/healing
3. Importance of food
 - Motivation
 - Making the soup
 - Building relationships through food
 - Skipping lunch
4. Sense of community
 - Choice
5. Storytelling/participatory action
 - Indigenous learning/teaching
 - Learnings from lived-experience
6. Absence of hierarchy
 - Just being human
 - Safe space
7. Relationship-building/silo-breaking
 - Silos and departments
 - Personal connections
8. The value of in-person meetings
9. External relationship-building
 - Partnerships
 - Impacts on service delivery
10. Policy
 - Indirect impacts of policy
 - The Crisis Response Pilot Project
 - Leveraging current policy
 - Other specific programs/policies mentioned
 - Silo-breaking impacting policy, projects and performance
11. Impact of Christina and Elder William

- The impact of hiring Indigenous Staff
- Presence in the data
- Setting up tawâw

Findings indicate that the strongest theme is Participatory Action/Storytelling, with Policy and Importance of Food following in that order; with Relationship-building/silo-breaking and Sense of Community closely following. The impact of Christina and Elder William was not directly discussed frequently, and yet they were mentioned a combined amount of 62 times within the final data, thus indicating a very strong influence regardless of participants making the connection on influence themselves. Summary of themes mentioned by participant groups is summarized in the table below, Figure 8.

Figure 8

Amount of times each theme is present within the data

Theme	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Sum
Impact of Christina and Elder William	2	2	3	3	10
External relationship-building	3	1	4	2	10
Hugs	6	2	1	3	12
Resiliency/healing	0	4	4	7	15
Absence of hierarchy	3	7	5	1	16
Sense of community	8	4	6	2	20
Relationship-building/silo-breaking	2	8	9	2	21
The value of in-person meetings	2	5	3	0	10
Importance of food	7	8	5	3	23
Policy	5	6	8	5	24
Storytelling/participatory action	3	7	9	6	25

In this study, the data demonstrated impacts by way of a series of nested circles categorized based on scale. The scale was based on the different levels of how participants experienced tawâw and interreacted there: The Self, The [internal] Community and The External Community. The Self can be described as how an individual may experience tawâw. That first-person experience with their senses and emotions. The next is The Community that attends tawâw. What is the community experiencing together or creating together within tawâw? Finally, the Greater Community: what is occurring in tawâw that is impacting external people who do not attend tawâw? Additionally, overall impacts were a result of Indigenous influencers that guided the direction of all impacts.

The Self

Introduction

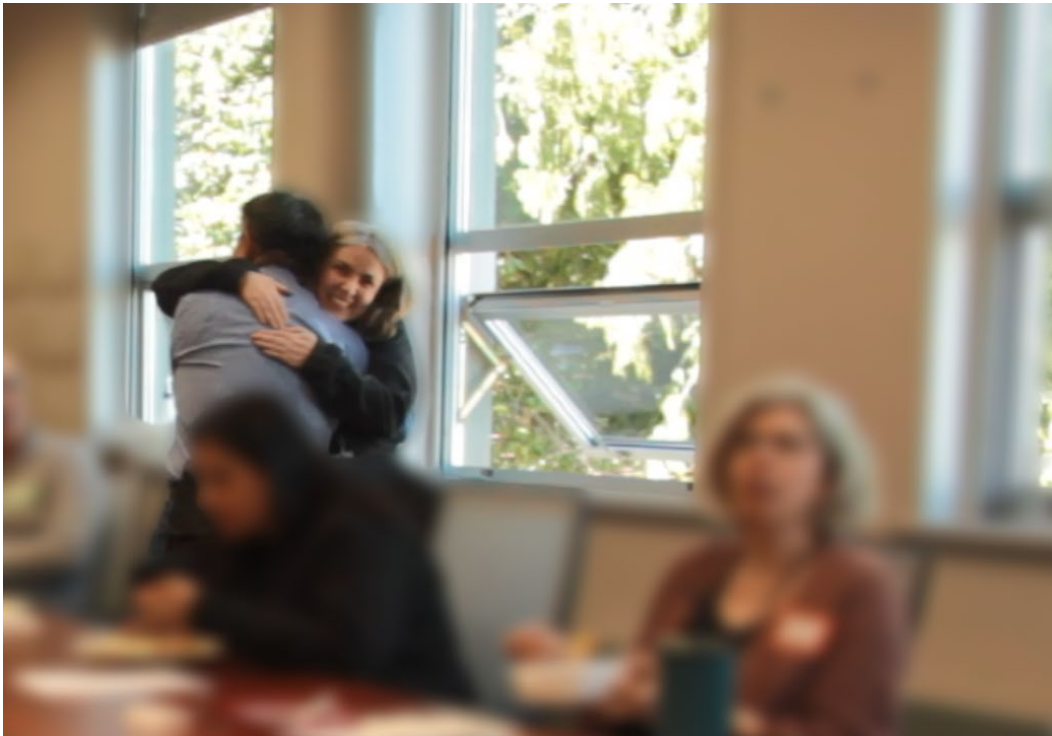
The self is categorized with three themes: Hugs, The Importance of Food and Resiliency/Healing. Hugs and The Importance of Food were present in all four groups; while Resiliency/Healing could not be present within Group 1, as it is a feeling that must be felt and expressed by an Individual, not assumed in observational data; however, Resiliency/Healing was felt by the researcher as the researcher became a participant of tawâw themselves, more on the researcher's perspective can be found in Appendix D.

Hugs

Within Group 1, it was found that Elder William endeavours to hug everyone in the room when they come in for tawâw and before they leave. "Sometimes I just come for a hug" says participant P1 from Group 1, and later they say they work uptown and can't always come but if they need some "rejuvenation" they will make the effort to come. Elder William hugged everyone he possibly could, including the researcher, example provided below in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Elder William stands to welcome a participant at session 1 of tawâw, photo taken by the researcher with blur added after



Hugging as a theme was discussed by 5 participants from Group 2. W1: "It's just Elder William is so warm, and he hugs everyone before and after." Both C and G agreed about that comment within table-top discussions. R2 spoke about the inception of hugs from Elder William during a holiday party and noted "But I think you could tell that was just so natural and that, just that extension, that connection and I'm really glad it's sort of become a feature of tawâw."

Participant G4, from Group 3 shared how powerful the hugs could be:

I definitely feel like you see it in a weird just coincidental moment. The meeting that was happening in A&B was very stressful right before and then to the point that there was tears in the meeting and then just like Elder [William] showed up to be there for the day and it was just like very perfectly timed, the staff member was having a hard time in that meeting. I appreciate it so much Elder [William] just like, to give her a big hug and it just felt different than getting any support from a director in the room.

Hugging fits into the Self Circle, as hugging is at an individual level and requires the sense of touch. It also transitions well into healing, as previously mentioned, participant P1 uses the word “rejuvenation” when describing hugging Elder William. Hugging appeared to be an experience, but as well as a motivation for return to tawâw.

Resiliency/healing

Participants described the feeling and motivation they got from tawâw, using descriptive words such as: support, spiritual, resilience, energy, sustenance, therapeutic, grounding, comforting, recharged. What they are describing are feelings of resilience and healing; resiliency and healing, within the context of tawâw, can be defined as providing a supportive and restorative environment for the participants that is improving their emotional and psychological well-being within the workplace.

Resiliency came up where participants stated they felt more resilient to finish their day after attending tawâw. Participant G from Group 2 shared: “When I do go back to my desk, I do feel like, more ok. I have a little bit of sustenance to get through the rest of my day or this tougher task. I feel like it fills me up a little bit.” G adds: “It's like a little bit of sun in your face and it's like ‘ok, things are going to be ok.’” This was mirrored by participants S1, C, Q and B. Participant R2 said: “There are days when I know I gotta get to tawâw. I've gotta go. I just need to go there. I need to see [Elder William] I need to connect with him. I need to connect with my colleagues. I just need that. It's always been just breathing new life in you for the rest of the week.” R2 goes on to say: “The feeling I get when I connect with [Elder William]. It's literally like a salve. It's almost therapeutic. I feel better. Even if I don't sit and eat if I just come in and connect with [Elder William] ‘good to see you. I needed to come today,’ I feel better leaving than I did coming in the room.” This sense of healing for the individual participants is not physical, but emotional, and at times, even spiritual, and improves their overall mental health. In the plainest of words: tawâw makes them feel good.

This resiliency and healing were not solely mentioned by participants, but frequently by Elder William and Christina Coolidge, Group 4. With Elder William stating: “I come here to heal myself” and when Christina Coolidge discussed healing Council Chambers: “We're trying to make it a space where it's healing for staff still. Part of our goal now is to try and heal that space.” This is a good example that demonstrates there is intentional processes from the Indigenous Leaders of tawâw to provide healing for participants, another example included Elder William gifting a feather to the Fire Chief. This act of healing through gift giving was reciprocated to the Indigenous Leaders. Supported with stories told about Elder William receiving patches from Firefighters and a drum from staff, amongst other gifts of appreciation, examples of gift giving in Figure 10.

Figure 10

Below are images from previous sessions of tawâw prior to data collection of Elder William receiving a drum from participants and another instance of Elder William providing a Fire Chief with a feather.
Photographs provided by Christina Coolidge



Participant W1 spoke about how long lasting tawâw is compared to other city initiatives: “Speaking to Elder William I was saying it’s amazing that this is still going cause a lot of things, sometimes we start at the city, or initiatives don’t get the attention, and dwindle over time.” Participant S2 shared similar sentiments, adding that there’s power in it: “It’s organic and it’s real and which is quite honestly where power really becomes sustainable, right?” The resilience of the program itself, to have sustained itself for over two years.

The Importance of Food

Food at the sessions described by the researcher:

Session 1: Indian Tacos – an array of taco toppings layered atop Bannock

Session 2: white bean, tomato & kale – light flavourful soup that makes you feel good

Session 3: Thai coconut broccoli soup – deeply comforting rich soup that made you want seconds

Session 4: Ramen cup of soup – fun and create a real “choose your own adventure” lunch

The importance of food was highlighted throughout all Groups. Observational data, Group 1, suggested that at every session people would talk about the food, particularly at the table where you serve yourself

your lunch, due to its proximity to the food and the chef that week. See a collage of images of the soup station and Bannock container in Figure 11.

Figure 11

Below is a collage image of two photos. The image on the left is of the soup cupboard that housed all of the soup dishware for tawâw and on the right is the bin that the Bannock arrives in for tawâw



If the meal is soup, participants would ask who made it, and if that person was close by, they would ask them to describe the experience. If the person wasn't close by, they would discuss how the soup tasted and any toppings they had chosen. Participants would also talk about the Bannock and the different flavours and if they want sweet or savoury. These conversations were occurring between all participants regardless of whether they knew one another. The food appeared to be the initial motivator to join tawâw. Within The Importance of Food theme some groupings could be found: motivation, making the soup, building relationships through food, and skipping lunches outside of tawâw.

Motivation

Participant S1 spoke about the initial motivation to attend tawâw: "So you know it, it is motivating to, to go and eat good food and eat good Bannock, that that is not something that's normally part of my life" and S2 sharing how there is increased employee engagement due to the food: "I've actually found it extraordinary the level of engagement, that commitment from my colleagues here... how it's taken the sort of the breaking of bread and just opened up new paths." Participants Q, S2, G4, C, G2 also referenced the motivation or interest to attend tawâw for the food.

Making the soup

S1, B, W1, L1, D1 and A1 participants spoke about the process of making the soup. S1 "I have really enjoyed the experience of making soup and sharing that with people. It's like nothing we've ever done here before." S1 adds: "So there's a common file spreadsheet where we can go in and, and pick a date that if we want to bring soup, we, we then bring soup on that date." Later S1 says: "And like, there's just something about soup that feels very special. I, you know, I love eating other people's soup." While participant B talks about the commonality the soup provides: "A huge part of the common ground is the soup. 'Who made it. What's in it? What's your recipe? Oh, you did the thing?...how did you feel about the experience of the soup? Oh, we all go through that, we don't think we have enough!' There's a massive conversation around who brought the soup and how it was done. It creates a huge common ground for people." This was echoed by participant W1. Making the soup creates a form of connection to others. During table-top 1 L1, D1 and A1 celebrated when W1 said they would be making soup for the first time there was a celebratory congratulations, as though she made it into a club.

Participants L1, D1 and A1 talked about the burden that making soup can be (just carrying the pot is difficult) but also the pressure for it to be good, adding there was a long sign-up of people wanting to help. They mention that it feels good to sign-up and mentioned how people don't know they can have a free lunch or that they can be reimbursed for the ingredients when they make soup. S2 shares more about volunteering to make soup and views it as part of the service delivery model of tawâw:

I think there's part of it that is a program. I think also part of it is a service delivery model... I think of a model that demonstrates an element of volunteerism in this case, 'hey, who's gonna make soup next week'? That's volunteerism and then placing no demands... And that is, I think that's another objective is demonstrating by the mere act of putting up your hand and, and providing food at no cost. It's another way to, to demonstrate... civic duty, it's so much embedded in that. And, so, I think there is a public service to the root element to all of this as well. And, and I think that's actually incredibly powerful here. So, when I think of public service, I think of all of us in government and I think many people, not all, I think many people are here because we believe in helping and serving Community.

Building relationships through food

Some participants, S2, C, R2, E2, G2, and S1 made the connection between eating the food and building relationships. Participant E2 said:

When I do come [to tawâw], I find it's got a good energy to it. There's a lot of different people. It's one of the things that brings people together. And I think that's always a positive thing. People bringing/making different types of soup. People bringing the Bannock. People getting together around food is generally, I think, it's a good way for people to connect."

Participants S2, G2, S1, and C echo E2. Participant R2 summarizes these sentiments by saying "So I get the nourishment from the food, but I get nourished by the relationships that I've built." It can then posit that these connections through way of food can impact the community and not just the self.

Skipping lunch

Three participants, Q, G4 and E2, spoke about how people will skip lunch or eat at their desk due to high workload, so they will eat at their desk to get more work done. G4 mentions how important it is to step away from their desk once a week “Just makes me feel like I can change the world more in this organization and, and, just be happier in the organization, because I left my desk and ate food with great humans.”

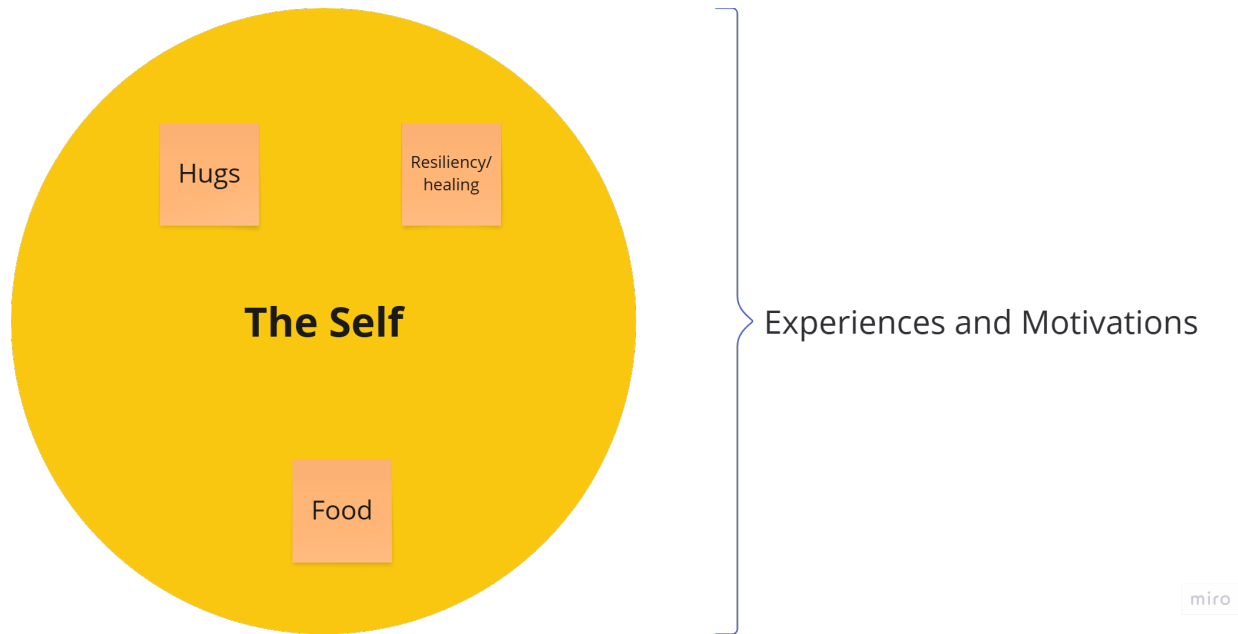
Food is strongly situated within self as way of experiencing that sense of taste. The creation of the soup is also an individual experience and so is the decision to participate in eating the food. It can be argued that food connects to the internal community and pulls individuals to come out of the Self and participate in Community. Making this theme a transitional theme.

Conclusion

The Self is that individual level and what they are sensing within themselves. What they are seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting or touching. It includes the feeling of hugs, the feeling of resiliency/healing, and taking part in eating and smelling the food. The experience of tawâw begins when the individual decides to take part. The motivation at The Self appears to be initially driven by The Food the individual attends to receive, but upon attendance they receive physical and emotional nourishment as well, which becomes a motivation to return, illustrated in Figure 12.

Figure 12

The first circle that begins with The Self



The Community

Introduction

The next nested circle is The Community, which contains the themes that involve the group of people that attend tawâw and how they experience tawâw and how they are impacted by their attendance. The themes are: Absence of Hierarchy, Sense of Community, Participatory Action/Storytelling, and Relationship-building/silo-breaking.

Sense of Community

Sense of Community was the most noted of the observations from Group 1. With observations about the feeling in the room, that it is a gathering more than a program/meeting and that it's filled with laughter, as depicted in Figure 13. Another observation that connected to community was who was in attendance, such as, someone's toddler [participant letter redacted for anonymity], and Christina having her dog, Layla, in a baby carrier. The personal conversations occurring also created a community setting, such as participant B1 talking about going on some dates with someone new. Observations had some quotes taken during conversations with the researcher. Participant P sharing "I was fasting for Ramadan, and I still came...People said 'why are you here? You can't eat.' And I said 'just to be with the people. I need the people.'"

Figure 13

Photograph provided by Christina Coolidge of a previous session of tawâw prior to data collection, photo is of public domain from the City of New Westminster



Participant S1 shares: "So one motivation for me was definitely to do something in community with my coworkers" S1 goes on to say, "As staff, we've shared meals together before, but it hasn't been, it hasn't felt so community oriented like it does at tawâw." S1 goes on to say: "I used to take Wednesdays off, you know, every six weeks or something, I would take a Wednesday off or it would be my work from home day. And that has changed now because I wanna be here on Wednesdays. I, I think being in community like that and not having to do anything but just show up and be your best person like that. I, I think it's as simple as that and you know, saying, saying hello and feeling welcomed." Participants Q, B, G2, C, G4 and G share similar comments; with S2 taking it further by adding a note specifically on how tawâw has now been adopted by other city staff:

I've been really, really surprised by the level of commitment. The, the fact that the organization is now just, you know, taking it [tawâw] away from Christina and it's theirs, which I know she has always said 'holy smokes. That would just be like that would be sort of the top level' and it's happened, and it happened so quickly.

tawâw is a Community because the Community self-identifies as one.

Choice

Choice was brought up by 6 participants who connected their ability to make a choice to participate in community. Choice at tawâw simply means that participants had a choice to attend tawâw or not, that choice of participation provided them with free will to partake in the program. Participant S2 shared: "The other Act or community here is I personally never felt that I have to go to each one because... like community has an element of, of free will to it as well." S2 adds: "And again, breaking down more barriers and just, just making it, just making it easy and it's that easy and that, that, that sense of personal free will and choice and, and the comings and goings that happened with that level of engagement. To me, that's all community." These sentiments were echoed in a similar fashion by participants Q, S1 and H1.

Participant C spoke about the difference between encouraging staff and forcing staff: "I encourage staff to go, and I go with them and then they all of a sudden realize oh wow I really like this. I give them the ability to make that decision if they want to go or not. It's ok if you spend an hour, it's not clocking in it's just the time and seeing that it is being supported to encourage your staff to go." C adds later the invitation could be formalized: "that could be elevated to HR. Put it on the onboarding sheet." G adds: "Whenever we get a new staff person in our department, I always make a point to go out of my way to invite them to tawâw the first Wednesday that they're there. And introduce them to a couple people."

Storytelling/Participatory Action

Storytelling seems to connect the people in the room. Sharing stories about their work, their lives, their interests and their histories. Story was also used as a tool by Elder William and Christina Coolidge to provide new understanding to their participants at tawâw. The researcher would only catch half of the stories and not enough context to retell them with full quotes for observational data, instead it was noted that if someone asks a question or makes a comment about something cultural Christina and Elder William would often reply in story; demonstrating an effective use of participatory action practices. The other observation when it came to stories were the participants sharing stories. Often of their weekends, vacations and work.

Indigenous learning/teaching

At tawâw stories were used as a teaching method by Christina Coolidge and Elder William, often seen as unintentional, was in fact, intentional and by the Indigenous leads of the program to facilitate learnings about Indigenous history, epistemology, and ontology, which can also be described as an Indigenous Lens. The learners were the receivers of these stories, the participants at tawâw, as seen below of Elder William gifting the researcher with Sage and telling a story about witnesses in Figure 14.

Figure 14

Elder William telling a story, still taken from video recorded by Jen Arbo



Participant S2 said:

Another objective is to come and, and, experience in a very soft and I'm gonna say this deliberately subversive Christina way of having us learn. Respect. Appreciate indigenous culture in a way that Christina's methods are so powerful. I actually wish the government would just take the chapter in her wisdom, which is about it is the act of doing versus the act of telling. And so, I think that is another objective where she demonstrates the, I think the love and compassion and the wisdom Indigenous culture through this about sharing, about, about respecting the role of elders as wisdom keepers and knowledge keepers. So, I think that's another objective, no?"

S2 also shared: "So I don't know if it's if it's Christina or is Elder Williams or it's the experience, I don't know because I actually don't differentiate."

Participants S1, Q, V2, B, B4 and S2 mention how there's learning and teaching. The teaching is facilitated by Elder William and Christina. Participant S1 thought that the teaching was not intentional: "I

don't feel like tawâw is a place where there's explicit teaching, and yet there's the experience of learning. So, I think that as a result of this program, is my commitment to understanding the truth and history and reality of Indigenous people and First Nations, my commitment has deepened 100% because of tawâw." Whereas participant Q felt it was a subtle form of teaching. Participant B4 made similar comments on the indirect manner of teaching from Elder William:

He doesn't go in there and talk about all the wrongs. If you do too much of that people feel bad. If people feel too bad about themselves, they hide from you. The message gets delivered in there, but the way that he focuses on let's make this better and let's be grateful for what we have, it creates this inviting environment to self-reflect in a safe place.

Participant B felt that the teaching had two parts to it, a conversational aspect and a physical where "They don't just come in and do it they explain what they're doing... There's context around it and it is applied." V2 talked about how first the connection with Elder William needed to be established before learning could occur, but now they bring in new recruits for the experience:

The ones [new recruits] that I've brought you can tell that it's a little bit eye-opening. Especially like we spoke about before, one time they met the Mayor there and just not prepared for those types like, just meeting all of these people that they, we talk about structure, would otherwise not engage with, in such a setting like this. Eye-opening would be the first word that comes to mind, but I think from that, that evolves into learning. Which is what we're hoping to be the biggest takeaway. Cause we're bringing them in the first week. They probably don't even have their uniforms yet. So, they haven't even done day one at the Police Academy.

Participants S2, C, G2, S, R2, and G4 all mentioned specific learnings they discovered during tawâw. Participant S2 shared a learning they had on Indigenous Pride, during a time when Elder William was gifted with a patch honouring event from the Fire Department. S2 spoke about pride being infectious and that "[The Firefighters] talked about the pride they felt by how moved he was" and now Firefighters are self-identifying themselves as Indigenous, whereas before they were not.

Participant C shared a story about a cultural tradition they learned when it comes to grieving and shared in that tradition with Elder William. Participant G2 shared a larger takeaway from tawâw that impacts their continued learning: "what tawâw is doing is helping me become aware of different approaches: giving more meaning for me when I read the TRC recommendations." Participant S spoke of a learning that also ties into policies and said, "We've called Indigenous folks Stakeholders for a long time even a year ago not actually recognizing they're rightsholders."

R2 and G4 both mention different ways they've applied their learning from tawâw. Participant G4 talks about the openness to their team meetings and how "the edge of formality has softened," this sentiment was echoed by Participant G2. Participant R2 mentions the logo of the city, which is a crown, and says due to the learnings they've had from their "Reconciliation journey" and themselves and the city would not have made that choice on logo today: "So, I gain comfort from that given that I had a role to play but we're trying to unravel ourselves and get back out of it.... We're aiming to have, if Council will let us, to have a new logo ready to go and begin to be implemented through the organization in 2025."

Christina shares a story with the researcher:

Have you ever heard that story about the ham? This woman was cooking a Christmas ham and her daughter you know is sitting at the counter and they were chatting away. She cuts the ends off the ham and puts it into the pan and throws it into the oven. And her daughter goes "why do you cut the ends off the ham" and she's like "I don't know that's the way grandma always did it" and the daughter says "why did Grandma do it" so she calls her mom "mom why do you always cut the ends off the ham?" Grandma goes "because our pan wasn't big enough and we had to make it fit" if you never question why you're doing something and if it's actually the right thing to do you're just going to keep wasting ham. So that's the question. (Personal Communications, Christina Coolidge, May 23, 2024).

Participants S1, S2, G2, and G all mention storytelling as a core program piece of tawâw, by participants as well as Christina and Elder William. Both G2 and G spoke about the stories specifically from Elder William. When talking about Elder William's stories, G2 said "He is very open to share them and show his vulnerability and he's a very knowledgeable person and I can take a lot from him by just having discussions with him no intentions or anything or agenda behind the discussion."

The learning participants speak of is rooted in Indigenous knowledge and performed specifically by two Indigenous leaders: Elder William and Christina. This knowledge they bring stems from their Indigenous Lens that they share with their participants.

Learnings from lived-experience

Learning through listening to lived-experience was mentioned by H1, B, R2, and G2. R2 specifically mentioned the non-judgment they feel when listening to Elder William's lived-experiences. G2 say: "It feels like people are being informed and educated, but not in a formal classroom setting way. It's in a way that we can all grow and learn together. It's changed or begun to, certainly in my functional areas, my awareness of things that I didn't necessarily know before tawâw" and adds "Now we have added dimensions that are really important and connected to reconciliation and understanding peoples lived-experiences and responding in a way that is meaningful and responsible for them. We now think of that where we couldn't before because it just wasn't in a frame of reference."

Absence of hierarchy

Status and job title were not present at tawâw creating a clear absence of hierarchy during the program. The absence of hierarchy was made known particularly with the presence of the Mayor. At session 1 the researcher noticed the Mayor talking about Star Trek to the table, anyone who was within earshot. Two new team members (participants R and K) who started that week introduced themselves to the people who were sitting near them, which included the Mayor, as seen in Figure 15. The Mayor was not introduced by his title, but by his first name. They discuss various topics, such as: what department they work in, council initiatives, and groundwater connections.

Figure 15

Image of the Mayor of the City of New Westminster attending tawâw



Absence of hierarchy was brought up specifically by 11 participants total. With 10 participants mentioning the tone within tawâw, Participant S2 shared: “There's no rank in there. There are no titles in there. There are no departments in there” this sentiment was also mentioned by L1, D1, A1, V2, B4, G2, S1, and Q. E2 summarizes the sentiments by saying “And what is also neat is I noticed the Mayor and some of the councillors come too. And I think that helps to lighten the atmosphere and stuff too.” E2 adds later: “You know people come to tawâw whether they're a director or manager or whether they're a new staff member or auxiliary or whatever. They all kind of mingle and they're all valued. It breaks down the barriers because it's not hierarchical.”

Just being humans

Four participants spoke about the humanizing experience of tawâw; because they felt they were there without their job title. Participant R2 states:

The breaking down of, the norm in a municipal setting, in a colonial community, that you are guarded on some things you don't address other topics in this setting and other things whereas it almost feels that we're stripped from all of that when we come in and now, we're all human beings. Having conversations and developing relationships with one another. And it feels almost freeing for that hour you're here to be outside of the restraints that you would normally carry around with you just because of expectations and cultural and municipal government culture and that kind of stuff.

This was reiterated by participants G, Q, and B. Demonstrating that participants bring their authentic selves to tawâw.

Safe Space

S1, C, G2, B and W1 touched on how they felt tawâw was a safe space to enter, meaning that they don't feel judged when attending tawâw. W1 said: "You don't need to know anyone...it's really welcoming and warm." W1 later adds: "It's just is kind of interesting because it's just in a board room in City hall which also we hear at tawâw how sometimes city hall can be so sterile. It just transforms that space somehow. Not necessarily physically change the space of the room but there's something interesting about just the safeness of that." S1, C and G2 shared similar comments. With B adding "We can explore who we are and explore who we want to be and explore who everybody else is without fear of judgment. Without having to worry about 'are we saying or doing the wrong thing.'"

The feeling like you can attend with judgment to be your authentic self fits within the experience of Absence of Hierarchy because it is that lack of hierarchy that is creating a judge-free zone where participants can be themselves.

Relationship-building/silo-breaking

Relationship-building is defined as growing relationships amongst participants who attend tawâw which is closely related to silo-breaking, defined as growing relationships amongst participants who attend tawâw who are not a part of the same department. With relationship-building and silo-breaking being so closely define they were amalgamated into one theme. Observations about where people were sitting were made. There was no assigned seating, and no sitting with your department. Once someone grabs their bowl of soup, they would find the first seat available and sit down next to someone; not always someone they knew. Of particular note: A group of parks workers came in early to tawâw and sat with each other began talking to each other about personal stories, as pictured in Figure 16, eventually someone joined their group to chat, and they did introduce themselves and joined in on the conversation immediately.

Figure 16

Photograph of three Parks workers with their coveralls hanging over the back of office chairs at tawâw



Relationship-building/silo-breaking was the strongest finding with 18/24 participants from Groups 2 & 3 mentioning it as an outcome from attending tawâw, some participants made multiple comments about the topic, which are categorized below.

Silos and departments

Some participants mentioned silos specifically, talking about the barriers often found in connecting with other departments and team-members across large organizations. Participant S1 spoke about being previously identified by their role whereas now with tawâw there's comfort and connection, participant S2 talks about the financial benefits of tawâw and said:

The breaking down of silos and departments. I can tell you. Organizations like mine that are large, you can spend millions of dollars trying to do that, you know? Yeah, it's a crazy little thing with sitting down next to someone going. "Oh, hey, I'm [S2]." 'I'm George.' 'Well, hey, George. And where do you work?' 'The works yard.' 'Oh hey, how long have you worked here?' That's breaking down silos that I couldn't have paid a consultant to do. That's huge, because the breaking down the silos is an initiative that every organization has a constant commitment towards. And here's this crazy little you know, 'pass the Bannock.'

While other participants spoke about the various departments at the city, and how tawâw created opportunities for those to speak with various people, which was the case for participants H1, E2, G, C, Q and V2. Participant E2 mentions that understanding a person's values and interests makes working together easier and also shared: "I think tawâw has helped people build relationships outside of departments." G also notes the expansion of their workplace social-circle and their relationships with

those they may already have known but adds: “But like there are people from other departments that I see at tawâw that I'm like: I would never interact with you if it were not for this occasion.” This was confirmed when participant C shares that tawâw creates a unique environment where you don't need to sit beside someone you already know: “if I was to go eat in the cafeteria, I would probably look for someone who I know to sit down with but I feel like with tawâw when I get my soup I just find the first like the closest empty seat.” Participant C also shares that City staff from other departmental buildings have also come tawâw, such as fire, animal services, works yard, engineering and Police.

Additionally, external departmental buildings to City Hall have also hosted tawâw, V2 said: “We don't normally host any type of event at the police department, so just opening that up was a new thing to us and its definitely made us realize that we have the ability to do that, so we're kind of looking at how we can do more things.” This was also confirmed by G2 who said, “You know city staff came down there and they got to open up the fire hall that's typically not as accessible as city to everyone we got to welcome everybody in and sort of get to experience tawâw in another setting.”

Participant Q made the connection between this type of silo-breaking and relationship-building to Indigenous knowledges and approaches:

To me, the objective [of tawaw] is for people to talk to each other to meet each other, to understand what other people in this city are dealing with every day to be human with your coworker, and to introduce, maybe subtly to folks who are living in this very colonial municipal construct to introduce them to a different way to interact as a team, which is maybe a little more, something more akin to how Indigenous people would, would interact [as a] team.

Personal Connections

Some participants, Q, S, G2, C and T, spoke about the personal connections they're making and understanding their colleagues better. Participant Q, C and G2 talk about the micro-interactions with colleagues that has helped them understand them better. Q said: “I mean, when you know people at a personal level, you know you can, you can have small conversations with them that help you understand what they're going through, and it, and again it, it's just nice to be able to come to a place to say hi to people and see smiles when you're when you're working. Yeah, it just it just improves the quality of your day and quality of your life.” New to the city at the time of discussions, participant T spoke about how they identified participants of tawâw by personal characteristics or interests before remembering their names or departments. Participants A4 and B4 also spoke about the specific impacts of Christina and Elder William when looking at relationship-building and Participant S made the connection between building relationships, Elder William and Christina and Truth and Reconciliation sharing:

Some of our work progress moves at the speed of relationships; relationships move at the speed of trust. And when I look at tawâw I see us in that first stage we're building relationship based on building a bit of trust and once we do that, we can actually start to do that work of truth and reconciliation. So, I think often cities begin at the middle point or the end point and its not successful because those relationships and trust haven't been built into the system. That's what I see as a huge positive and really what's happening there is we're moving reconciliation work from living in our brain to living our hearts. Which makes the work actually much more meaningful and more powerful. So, that's what I see the value of tawâw, Elder William or

Christina...we've all benefitted because it's brought staff together as well, not just the relationships with Elder William and Christina but also with each other.

Participants B and G4 mentioned the benefits of having that personal relationship when collaborating or connecting on work related tasks that are outside of their regular department or team. Participant B said:

I've made amazing connections in my work. I got to know so many people on a level that I would never have. I built relationships on a level that I would never had, otherwise. It has positively affected my work dramatically. It accelerated the relationships so quickly to a level that I don't know if I would have gotten by this point with regular working environment. So, at tawâw I'm talking to people about their children, about their horses, about their holidays, about their desires, their fears. The things that make them a human. Not a worker. And all of sudden when I need to email somebody about work, I have this fulsome background of who they are and a relationship that's already established. So, we come together in a compassionate way on a level that we wouldn't have in regular western society relationship-building.

The Value of In-person meetings

Participants shared that they saw value in tawâw being an in-person only meeting. Participant G4 spoke about the value of seeing people outside of digital platforms:

You know them in-person and like instead of teams messaging them, like know that they're here on a Wednesday, and I can go and like pop by their office... When everybody is like hybrid and it's not in the building, so many [Microsoft] Teams meetings, like to actually be in-person and feel connected again with the new staff is helping me feel less like I've been losing that thing that I've appreciated at the city for so long... And it's coming with sincere conversation rather than a resource request, where you're immediately worried about, like do you have the staff support and do you have the budget? And like, that's not there.

Similar sentiments were shared by Participants H1, R2 and E2. tawâw is always in-person. Making this a unique program during post-COVID era.

Participant B shares:

It's taken on it's own life and it creates a bubble within City Hall where, I know I can go, I can see friends, I can get food, I can be in a safe space, if I have something on my mind I can talk about it. If I need to be quiet and alone that's acceptable. It covers this need that we have inside our hearts to belong, to be accepted, to accept others, and it has been through that an amazing tool for work. I have made so many connections within the city.

Participant P, P1, S1 and G2 share similar views.

With Q sharing:

When I'm in City Hall, I try to make it [to tawâw], it's a nice break in the middle of the day. I get to, of course, have some food for lunch, which is often a meal I skip anyway just because I'm busy doing other things, but it also gives me a chance to just talk to different people around the hall, different people. Like, I find I almost always meet somebody who I haven't met before, who works in the city.

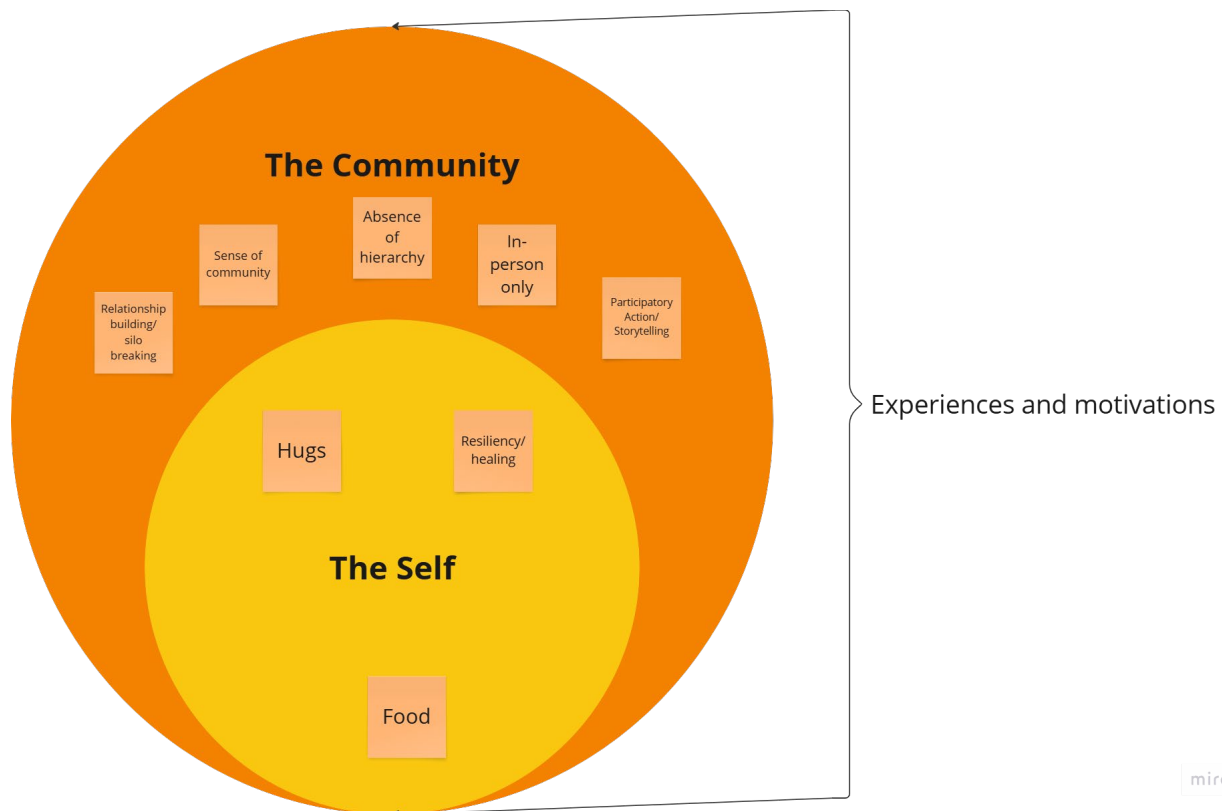
Demonstrating that City Staff are not only coming to tawâw but enjoy attending in-person only programming at their workplace.

Conclusion

The Self is that individual level and how the individual is experiencing tawâw whereas The Community is what the participants as a collective are experiencing at tawâw. Participants state that they feel like a community, one that they enter into freely. They are motivated to return for the community where they are learning, feeling no judgement and building relationships. The Community does not exist without The Self and what brings them there, which is initially food driven, but The Community is similar to the findings within The Self, because the experiences at tawâw become motivations to return. The experiences begin with The Self but then expand to The Community, creating nested circles that demonstrates how tawâw maintains employee engagement for the program. The Self and the Community is illustrated in Figure 17, and shows how The Self and The Community combine. Within this nested circle we discover the motivations that other municipalities may be able to replicate, which are: safe spaces that are non-hierarchical, cross-departmental, in-person and provides learning through way of storytelling and connection.

Figure 17

The Self and The Community combined



The Greater Community

Introduction

The Greater Community can be described as how the City Staff who attend tawâw are impacting the larger community of New Westminster. Within The Greater Community, there were two themes: External Relationship-Building and Policy Discussions. Policy is being developed by way of The Community, but the decisions are impacting the greater Community of New Westminster.

External Relationship-Building

External Relationship-Building is defined as building relationships beyond internal City Staff. Relationships with the New Westminster Community, be it taxpayers, visitors, partnering organizations, residents and the unhoused.

Partnerships

Six participants spoke about connecting with external settings by using tawâw as an engagement tool aiding with building relationships between City Staff and external partners or New Westminster residents. Q shared "So I, I find it really interesting that it, it's, it started with kind of just Christina and, and [Elder William] saying like let's you know meet with staff and create, you know, have a space for that, and then, but now it's, you know, then I think they had soup and Bannock at t̄m̄əsew̄tx^w or Dan's Diner came in and joined it." Similar sentiments were shared by S1, B and W. Through observational data, it was noted there was attendance of a Provincial Government representative at tawâw at session 2. When asked, the representative said they found out about tawâw at a Medicine Wheel workshop and was curious about it and that's when they were invited to attend. The researcher then asked Christina about the attendance of the representative and it was confirmed that external partners are invited into the space from time to time, Christina provided examples of external attendees such as: Dan's Diner, Vancouver municipal workers and a Colouring Contest winner.

Impacts on service delivery

Four participants spoke about how they or their team, interact differently with the public as a result of tawâw, which has helped in building their external relationships with the public. Participants L1 and A talked about the way in which they email with the public. That it is now softer as a result of tawâw. They watch their wording more carefully. Another impact came from V2 saying "We've been doing things like bringing our new recruits to tawâw just so that they like, right off the bat, have that immediate connection to the Elder. That they've met an Elder in a casual no-barrier setting like this, because chances are the next time that they're going to meet someone from an Indigenous community is gonna be in a work setting so having that first meeting being in a setting like this is really beneficial."

Participant B4 made claims that tawâw has impacted The Firefighters who are a part of The Second Responders Program, as seen in Figure 18, in a positive way, in how they interact with the public:

We instituted public programs like the second responder program for the firefighters and I was a little bit worried about the treatment of the population and I was quite pleasantly surprised to

find out with how engaged and how supportive they were with these programs... And I think the change in awareness in them came from tawâw. There has to be some awareness to it. Somebody has to make them rethink what they know or what they believed or what they grew up with. I think tawâw has been the biggest part of that.

Figure 18

Photograph taken by researcher during final visit of data collection and just so happen to see New Westminster Fire Rescue approach someone in distress



At tawâw session 1, the researcher notes that Elder William handed the remaining Bannock to Participant W to hand out to people. The researcher then attended session 2 and found out participant W handed out the Bannock with participant T to community members which included residents and the unhoused. At session 3, it was confirmed that 20 extra Bannock are always ordered, so that participants, often Participant W and T, could continue to hand it out to the community.

Policy discussions

The second most mentioned theme within all findings was policy discussions. Policy discussions came up in several different ways and included both small and big P policy; big P policy being those that are formal and passed by Council and small P being those projects/programs/strategies that are running at the administrative level.

An overall general observation was made that various work-related topics were discussed within the room during tawâw. Topics such as: policies, regulations, resource sharing and public engagement.

Specific discussions were observed three times by the researcher:

Session 2 – Participant A1 talks about ad regulation with participants A and W1.

Session 3 – Participants P & P1 start talking about how the logo for the city might change from the crown.

Session 3 – Participant G4 talks about how they can learn about grant opportunities from the Economic Development Team.

Indirect impacts to policy

Some participants mentioned the simpler and indirect impacts tawâw is having on policy discussions. Participants H1, R2, S2, and G2 spoke about taking alternative approaches to policymaking and applying learnings they've had from tawâw. Participant Q shares how people will ask for their opinion on policy matters at tawâw; informal conversations they believe impacts how policies are written later on. Participants S2, H1 and R2 explained the impacts of attending tawâw and knowing Christina and Elder William; sharing that the Indigenous lens, lived-experiences and knowledge now alters the approach of policymakers. R2 said: "So 15 years ago with the logo [which is a crown], no one around here would've batted an eyelash, because we didn't have that perspective, that information, that learning. We now have it. So, whether it's implicitly stated in the policy or not its impacting it." R2 elaborated with an example beyond the review of the current logo: "When we work on public engagement, and I never mentioned our favourite term in engagement is 'which stakeholders are you consulting with' A1... learned from Christina that it's not that. That it's 'rights and title holders'. And A1 then is, in [their] work with staff, are making sure that they shift our language around that." R2 then asks and answers: "has tawâw impacted policy? More than policy. Just how we do things."

Participant G2 talks about how their team was already taking a trauma-informed approach to crisis work but that they did not understand the approach until tawâw:

I'd put it more as empathy and compassion. We've sort of taken what we've learned from meeting Christina and what we've learned from tawâw and now we go out on the street and we're meeting these people in crisis. We can build on that trauma-informed practice that we really didn't know why we were doing that, but now we've learned why, and we've learnt through people like [Elder William's] experience, their past trauma and how to recognize that and support that in your care for people.

Participants often referred to things that Christina Coolidge had worked on, that had large impacts but did not always tie back to tawâw and instead tied back to other Reconciliation work within her mandate. Some people openly admitted they didn't know how to separate the two. Participant R2: "It's a collection of what we're learning and how we're growing and experiencing, for me, at tawâw, combined with Christina's work, combined with Council's leadership with wanting to accomplish this and do this and making it ok for us to go on this journey. For me it's a critical component of all that [policymaking]."

This is an indication of the holistic approach that is being taken by the Indigenous Relations Advisor when it comes to Truth & Reconciliation efforts.

The Crisis Response Pilot Project

Many participants, G4, A1, B4, B, A4, S, spoke specifically about the Crisis Response Pilot Project (CRPP) when asked how *tawâw* has impacted policymaking. Participants A1 and B4 talked about how originally CRPP did not include an Indigenous Lens. With A1 mentioning that Christina called the team to task: “she asked where are the people? This is not people centred.” This was confirmed by B4 when they said:

As we review back, like there was not, we did not have representation from our unhoused population to help set any of that. It was still just city staff saying, ‘based on what we’ve learned from Kelowna, from Edmonton, from Victoria, wherever, like this is what we think the model should be’ and still getting racist feedback of like we said ‘we’re gonna do better and be inclusive on our decision-making and we still haven’t done it on this core project’ [CRPP] so I appreciate that, that there’s, uh, maybe again with those relationships with that trust you can say that out loud to each other and not feel quite as panicked in a way that stops you from trying again.

Participants spoke about the changes that occurred to CRPP once an Indigenous Lens was applied. Participant B said: “a document I just read out of an inbox that had a lot of... just the lens was different. It had such a strong Indigenous lens that it made me think to myself ‘did it spring from [tawâw]?’” B then adds: “very compassionate language and not condescending or tokenary. It felt very real.” Participant A4 shared that any policy changes will include their Indigenous Partners on the CRPP project, Sanala, as well as Christina, and Elder William when they attend *tawâw*. A4 shared a time when Elder William provided feedback to CRPP:

Sometimes like last meeting we did a presentation on the Crisis Response Pilot Project and one of the things that came out there is we're looking at an engagement, cause there has to be an evaluation component, but could we do an engagement over soup and Bannock? Bring it out to the community? That was what Elder William said. It is an opportunity sometimes with just discussion, learning, sometimes it's more directed. cause this time we did a presentation and Elder William's asked questions and other staff.

Participant S also spoke on policy work, community engagement and CRPP, saying “...that's actually recognizing that many of the folks we're supporting, community members, you know, have intergenerational trauma. And its actually the work we're doing today is much different than what happened 10 years ago because of these relationships that have been built.” Participant S went on share how the city has applied learnings from these relationships:

... at one of the shelters downtown somebody mentioned that some of the residents weren't participating and one of the staff actually says 'well have you brought in an Elder to support some of the residents to actually build some of those relationships before you actually expect someone to just come to a BBQ, or Christmas party, or whatever? Have you done the work of doing your own *tawâw* at the shelter or at the non-profit'. So one of the benefits seems its expanding beyond these tables and into some of the community work we're doing. Because staff are now exiting this room and taking those lessons out in the community.

Participant A4 summarizes the work Christina did to discuss Indigenous voice with Council on the CRPP:

The other thing I will say is the city now has an Indigenous [Relations] Advisor and we have an Elder at the city and they're also involved in this [the Crisis Response Pilot]... She is also guiding this work too, more from inside the organization but she has a much broader mandate. And then Sanala is specific to the Crisis Response.

A4 adds:

I'll just say [Christina] at a Council meeting she called us out in regards to 'how can you have 5 non-Indigenous people bringing forth an initiative like this where one of the populations whose needs are not being met are Indigenous'... and that's where we decided to engage Sanala. And she is taking a more active role in our meetings. I think it's always a good reminder that people can have good intentions but on the other hand that viewpoint and lens needs to be intricately interwoven as opposed to being a touchpoint through consultation.

Leveraging current policy

An additional sub-theme under policy was leveraging current policy to aid in new goals formed out of tawâw. Participants H1 and C spoke about the reimbursements being made to Indigenous people for their time. Participant C shared about how they had a question about honorariums and approached Christina:

What we were able to do by just, you know, checking in with her [Christina] is, regards to honorariums and what we do to pay for people who come in to speak, or activity, or activations, so I had this conversation with her and then she sent that email out to everybody... that email that went out to everybody to talk about what is protocol... I wanted to implement it within my division, and then, so from that, we now have a process.

Other specific programs/policies mentioned

Participants from Group 2 and 3 also mentioned specific programs or policies, such as: the Second Responders Program, Missing Persons Unit and regulations on non-road gas equipment.

Participant B4 talks about a Second Responder Program for firefighters that was created and shares: "We've instituted other programs that rely on other City Staff. I think tawâw has influenced their approach, their stigma and their thought-processes."

While Participant C and V2 spoke about the work being done at a policy level for the Police Department:

Especially as police, we're looking at, we have our own processes to go through when it comes to Reconciliation, and meeting people that were here before us... We've been doing things like bringing our new recruits to tawâw just so that they like right off the bat have that immediate connection to the Elder that they've met an Elder in a casual no-barrier setting like this, because chances are the next time that they're going to meet someone from an Indigenous community is gonna be in a work setting so having that first meeting being in a setting like this is really beneficial...I know that a high percentage of missing persons are Indigenous Female, so one of the biggest changes we've made structurally is creating a unit to address missing persons specifically, so having our eyes open to how we can address some of the biggest issues out

there... our Wednesdays [tawâw] are just a continual reminder of where we were and where we're at and where we need to be.

Participant Q shares a story about how connecting through tawâw with a works-yard crew member created an avenue of learning, so they could go on and impact policy-discussions for Metro Vancouver. "I went down actually down [to the works yard crew] and chatted with [works-yard crew members] because I recognized somebody there [from tawâw]." Q adds "And that actually brought up conversations around how their yard equipment works, how their indoor equipment works, and as we go into a conversation, on Metro Vancouver about regulating gas versus electric powered lawn equipment." Q goes on to say this advice helped inform regulations for Metro Vancouver. "So, we have delegated air quality regulation powers as Metro Vancouver and we were discussing how is Metro Vancouver going to engage on this? And I was more informed on what, what we actually do, like how we are actually converting over to electric." Q concluded the story stating: "So I was able to talk about a policy with other policymakers with a little bit knowledge of what the actual ground impact of that is." More on this within the document analysis section.

Silo-breaking impacting policy, projects and performance

Finally, two participants spoke directly about the impact tawâw is having on solutions coming out of complex problems because of the cross-departmental relationship-building coming out of tawâw. With G4 sharing a story about an attempt at collaboration they made between the school district and their Parks department, while G4 is not within a department that works directly with either, they saw the potential and made the connection "...like now I have this connection [referencing tawâw] where I can be like [city staff member who works in trees], like this might be a wild idea. I don't know if this worked with your funding, but can we make friends with the school district and get these trees planted?"

This type of cross-departmental solutioning reduces bureaucracy and streamlines projects, which impacts performance.

Participant S shares how the city is taking an umbrella approach to Truth and Reconciliation, another form of silo-breaking:

The other thing is sometimes truth and reconciliation work lives in the silo of a city, but this actually brings it to an umbrella. So, it covers every aspect. Truth and Reconciliation lives in Engineering the way we do service upgrades. Even you can make a connection in the way we do so much of our planning work. So, it encompasses us under one understanding of trust and relationships, and I think we're just at the beginning too. These things take a long time. When they become embedded is when we can have those systems.

Projects and policy discussions are happening at tawâw, impacting the creation, completion and expediency of these projects and policies and those go on to impact residents and visitors of New Westminster.

Conclusion

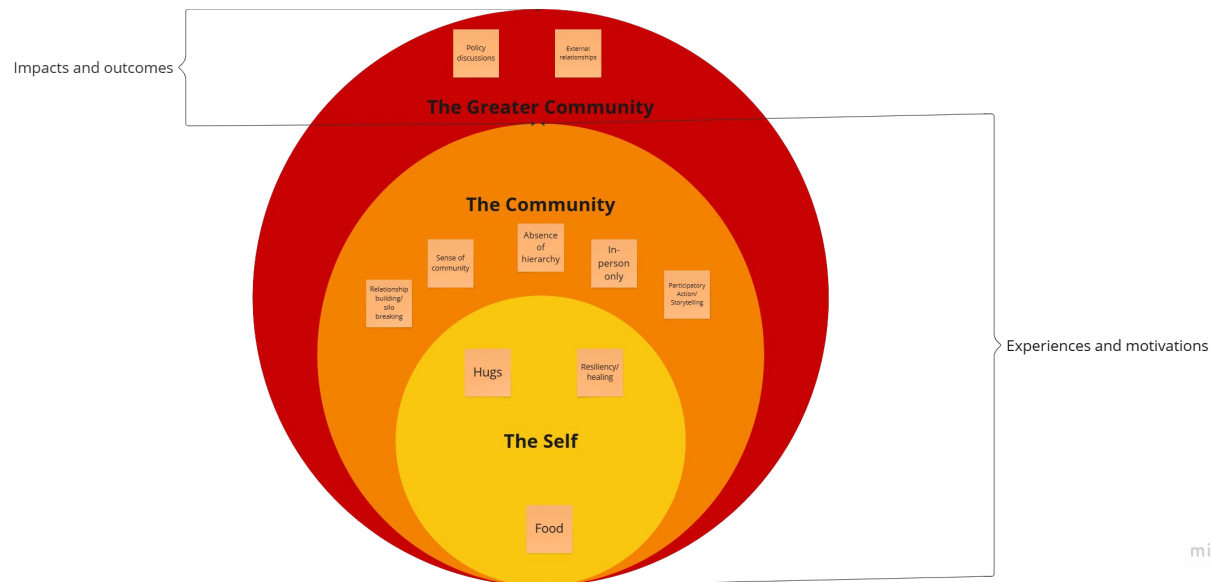
The Self and The Community nested circles help to identify how City Staff are experiencing tawâw and what is motivating their attendance, while The Greater Community demonstrates impacts or outcomes

that tawâw is having on residents and visitors of New Westminster, as demonstrated in Figure 19. Some important outcomes noted by participants are:

1. tawâw can be used as an engagement tool with residents and visitors to New Westminster;
2. tawaw has impacted municipal employees in how they interact with the public;
3. projects are being streamlined due to silo-breaking because of tawâw; and
4. policy discussions have been influenced by tawâw.

Figure 19

Demonstrating how each nested circle combines



Impact of Christina and Elder William

Introduction

Christina Coolidge was hired on at the City of New Westminster to aid with Reconciliation efforts and she brought in Elder William because, as she describes, she needed her Elder (Personal Communications, Aug. 6, 2024). They created tawâw together and continued to impact the direction tawâw was taking through their Indigenous knowledges and experiences, which is unique to the nested circles as Christina and Elder William cannot be found within a singular nested circle as they impact all nested circles.

The Impact of Hiring Indigenous Staff

The impact of Christina and Elder William on the City of New Westminster began before Christina’s idea for tawâw. It began, because the City made the choice and hired their first Indigenous Relations Advisor. Two participants spoke directly about the hiring of Christina Coolidge, shared below.

Participant 1 [letter has been redacted to ensure anonymity]:

The other candidate, which was the one we hired, was the one who scared the hell out of us. Because they were brave enough to say: 'you gotta do things differently. You've gotta change the way you're doing these things. You're not doing it right'. We took a dive and hired that person who scared us a little bit. So, Christina's been doing a very good job at bringing things to us that scare us a little bit and shake up how we do things. Recognizing that we can't keep doing things that we've been doing for 30 years and expect different results.

Participant 2 [letter has been redacted to ensure anonymity]:

And I said, 'I don't know if you should take this job. I don't know if we're really prepared for this as an organization', I said 'we're in deep paralysis. So afraid of making mistakes that we have rendered ourselves still'. And I said, 'and I just, and I think we're just, we're going to frustrate you. We're gonna, we're going to let you down. Uhm so I don't know. I don't know. If you should take this job... And she said, 'you know what? Let's see where this takes us.'

Christina Coolidge was provided with the autonomy to create tawâw with support from leadership, with a leader at the city sharing: "I need to support this cause I need to support her and it's like all things with Christina, like that's just stereotypical, because she just goes and she's a teacher and she's the guide... we're just there to watch what she does" [participant letter redacted to ensure anonymity].

The impacts of Christina and Elder William on City Staff grew with Christina's idea for tawâw: "It happened because Christina had a vision" said participant S2.

Participant B summarizes the overall impact Christina and Elder William have:

With Elder Williams' enormous compassion and enormous capacity for love and forgiveness and creating a safe space and Christina's' fire and drive to make it happen and to push through it's turned into this...for me, it's turned into this second home, almost.

Presence in the data

Christina and Elder William are directly discussed as having an impact on tawâw and City Staff. Mentions of the two creators of tawâw and their direct impacts are quoted by Participants: Q, A4, S2, C & G. Within the amalgamated data of Groups 2 and 3 Elder William is mentioned 37 times within all quotes pulled while Christina is mentioned 25 times within all quotes pulled. Of particular note are the high mentions within Participatory Research/Storytelling and the Policy themes. A good example is when Participant Q said: "I think for now it's just been laying the groundwork. A year is not very long in terms of policymaking in a government. But I'm pretty confident for those who attend tawâw regularly have quite a bit of personal experience on a table-side level with Christina and Elder [William] that our risk of having a short-sighted policy, developing one, is much reduced."

Additionally, Elder William and Christina Coolidge are present in: Absence of Hierarchy, External Relationship-Building, and Relationship-building/silo-breaking. Elder William is also mentioned within the themes of: Resiliency/Healing, The Importance of Food, and Hugs. This does not include how often each participant spoke of Elder William and Christina. For example: participant S2 mentions Christina 27 times in their interview from Group 3. This indicates that both Christina Coolidge and Elder William have a strong influence on tawâw.

Christina Coolidge says: “Then I go back to the very beginning of like it was an accident. I think it wasn't an accident. It was meant to be created but there was no planning. I always go to that first moment. [Elder William] ‘oh I'll bring some Bannock’ and I was like ‘Oh I'll bring some soup’” (Personal Communications, Aug. 6, 2024).

It is apparent the strong bond Christina Coolidge and Elder William have. Elder William says “I refer to this one as Mighty Mouse” as he nods his head towards Christina, photo of Christina and Elder William in Figure 20.

Figure 20

Christina Coolidge and Elder William, pictured inside City Hall after a session of tawâw



Setting up tawâw

An interesting shift was noted between sessions 1 and 4. At session 1 Christina had been doing the main amount of setup and preparations for Indian Tacos, whereas by session 4 she had helped bring a couple things into tawâw, but a group of participants were doing primary setting up of the soup, sides and drinks.

“It happens regardless of whether Christina is there or not.” (Participant S1).

S2 also says: “The fact that the organization is now just, you know, taking it away from Christina and it's theirs, which I know she is always said holy smokes. That would just be like that would be sort of the top level and it's happened, and it happened so quickly.”

Conclusion

Christina and Elder William have an impact on all the nested circles of tawâw. They have influence on the individuals attending tawâw through their creation and facilitation of the soup and Bannock, they influence community in how they teach at tawâw and the external community through engagement and policy discussions when they are brought to tawâw. Christina and Elder William seem to be guiding the direction of tawâw and are bringing a specific perspective and lens with their influence.

Findings conclusion

The findings reveal a conceptual framework of three nested circles that scale the motivations and impacts of tawâw and can be best summarized as:

- The Self – is the Individual’s experiences. Motivations of the individual are initially driven by food; participants return for hugs and healing/resiliency. The impacts on the individual are physical and emotional nourishment.
- The Community – is the participants of tawâw as a collective. Motivations for The Community are created by the non-hierarchical space, the safe space. The impacts on the participants are learning through participatory action/storytelling, building relationships with staff from various departments, and the sense of community. The impacts experienced by participants become new motivations for continued in-person attendance once realized.
- The Greater Community – is the community beyond City Staff who attend tawâw. Motivations of The Greater Community are mostly unknown. Residents of New Westminster do not seek out tawâw, but they may be motivated by food to attend engagement opportunities with the city and end up attending tawâw. The impacts on The Greater Community of tawâw are the influences on service delivery and policy, listed by participants of tawâw; such as language use in the Crisis Response Pilot Project and the Second Responders Program, and the removal of the term "stakeholder" from documentation. Participants also state that Honorariums have been influenced by tawâw and external policies in Metro Vancouver.

Christina and Elder William's influence on tawâw, through their Indigenous Lens, has been pivotal in shaping tawâw’s success. Christina Coolidge highlights the importance of relationship-building and participation over policy changes and emphasizes the effectiveness of Indigenous Ways of Knowing. The findings of this study support Christina's statements, demonstrating that the relationships formed at tawâw have significant impacts on both individual participants and the broader community.

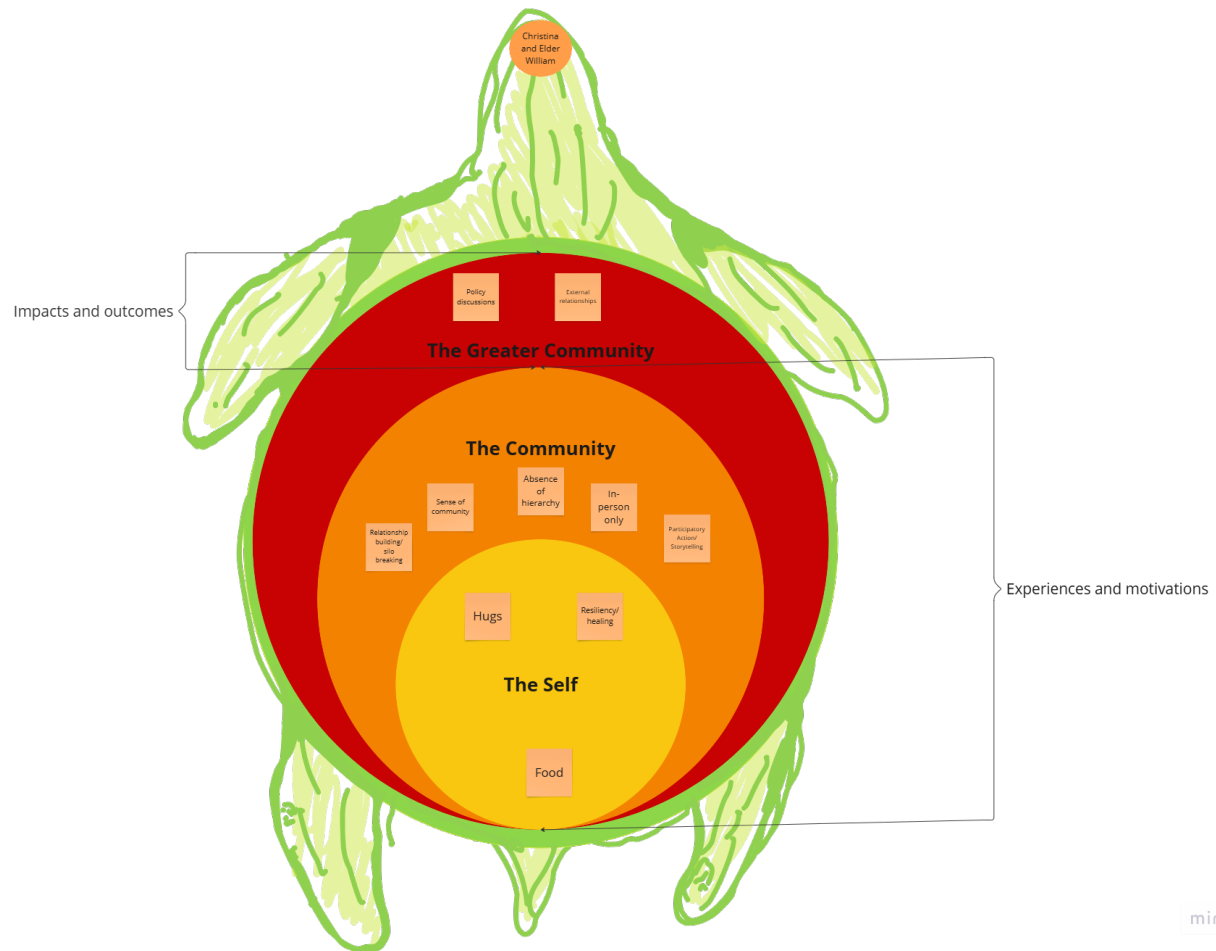
The interconnectedness of The Self and The Community is evident, with individual motivations inspiring the growth and maintenance of the community. Participants build connections across departments during tawâw, facilitated by in-person gatherings and learning through storytelling and discussion. This non-hierarchical, safe space allows participants to be their authentic selves, fostering relationships that extend beyond tawâw and positively impact work-related projects.

The relationships formed at tawâw also influence The Greater Community through policy work and service delivery. According to participants, tawâw has impacted language use in the Crisis Response Pilot Project and the Second Responders Program and has begun to influence the removal of the term "stakeholder" from documentation. Additionally, tawâw has had a direct impact on the use of Honorariums and has influenced external policies in Metro Vancouver. Tawâw provides experiences and motivations for engagement that ripple out to impact the greater community with policy and external relationship-building. Christina Coolidge and Elder William have a direct influence on all findings as they

have been integral in the success of tawâw and demonstrates the value of hiring Indigenous Staff, another finding of this research, this is depicted in Figure 21.

Figure 21

Each nested circle is sitting atop a guiding turtle, which represents Christina Coolidge and Elder William's Indigenous influence



The conclusion of the findings section answers an important secondary research question: Who has been influenced by tawâw? The nested circles demonstrate the relationships between The Self, The Community, and The Greater Community as they are all impacting one another. The Community and Greater Community would not exist without The Self nor without the presence of Elder William and Christina Coolidge, as their Indigenous Lens has influenced throughout the program.

Discussion and Analysis

Within discussion and analysis, the researcher pulls relevant theory and previous study to explore the research question. With grounded-theory the researcher must provide discovery purely from the data (O'Leary, 2004, p.134). A combination of case study and grounded-theory proved to be effective for this research.

Answering part 1 of the research question

What policies has tawâw impacted and how at the City of New Westminster?

Introduction

Half of the primary research question endeavours to understand which policies were impacted by tawâw and how at the City of New Westminster. A document analysis was used to validate the claims within the *Policy* theme of this research to see if the policies listed by participants were documented and impacted; and if so, how? This includes both small and big P policies. The conclusion of this section answers not only part 1 of the research question, but also a secondary research question: "What are the political and structural reforms taking place?"

Document analysis

Documents were discovered through searching escribe, New Westminster's web platforms and Google. Any search strings that did not result in relevant documents were not reported below. It is of value to mention a key limitation of the document analysis: the City of New Westminster does not have an easily accessible policy library for the researcher to access. The researcher could have missed supporting documents as a result of the limited access. Additionally, requests were made for documents to participants who mentioned specific strategic or policy changes they claim were impacted by tawâw, those that provided supplemental documents are listed within the subheadings of the document analysis. The small and big P policies being reviewed for the document analysis are:

- Stakeholder/rightsholder language changes
- Crisis Response Pilot
- The Second Responders Program
- Missing Persons Unit within NRPD
- Honorariums
- Small gas-powered equipment Metro Vancouver

Stakeholder vs. rightsholder

The Stakeholder vs. rightsholder language changes were not a big P policy. Participants shared that they were educated about the historical ramifications of the word stakeholder and said they began sharing out the change. "...the term 'stakeholder' has colonial connotations. It was historically used to refer to

the person who drove a stake into the ground to demarcate the land they were occupying or stealing from Indigenous Peoples” (Reed et al., 2024, p.2).

A request for strategic documents related to the Crisis Response Pilot Project. was made to Participants who mentioned the Project. A PowerPoint was shared by two City Staff that was created October 30, 2023. No further documents were provided to the researcher. The PowerPoint presentation outlined the approach for the Pilot, but did not mention tawâw; however, the presentation was created over one year after the inception tawâw.

The search for stakeholder in the escribe platform resulted in hundreds of results; however, the goal was to see if there were any recent usages of the word stakeholder. A Regular City Council for Workshop Meeting as recently as July 15, 2024, was found to have the word stakeholder present (City of New Westminster, July 15, 2024, p.5). A google search resulted in a Facilities Asset Management Plan for 2024 where the word stakeholder was present 24 times, demonstrating that not only Council files but the administrative side were both still using the word stakeholder within their documentation. These findings demonstrate that a formal Big P policy has not been adopted across the organization. Rather, it can be verified that although City Staff are discussing the reduction in the use of the word stakeholder at tawâw and certain Staff members are removing the word from their use in the workplace, it has not been implemented throughout the city, as of the writing of this report.

Crisis Response Pilot Project [CRPP] and Second Responders Program

A document request was made to Participants who mentioned the Crisis Response Pilot Project. To view any strategic documents for the Crisis Response Pilot Project. A PowerPoint was shared by two City Staff that was created October 30, 2023. No further documents were provided to the researcher. The PowerPoint presentation outlined the approach for the Pilot, but did not mention tawâw; however, the document was created over one year after the inception of tawâw.

Although participants mention a strategy document having ‘an Indigenous Lens’ the document was not provided upon request. A City Council Workshop from Monday, July 8, 2024, where the Crisis Response Pilot Project provided an update on their progress: “Council approved a two-year pilot project and strategy to address the overlapping crises of homelessness, mental health, and substance use... Indigenous consultants [were] engaged, toward planning and implementing [a] pilot project through [an] Indigenous knowledge lens” (2024, p.45). The progress update confirms claims by Participant A4, when they stated that the CRPP was called out for not involving Indigenous perspectives. Participant A4 discussed that the CRPP connects frequently with tawâw, their Elder-in-Residence and their Indigenous Relations Advisor. The influence by tawâw is supported by A4 and this document but cannot confirm if it was solely from tawâw or if other Reconciliation efforts also had an impact.

A City Council Meeting from April 8, 2024, also confirms that in 2024 the CRPP did engage Sanala Planning, providing additional validation in the claim within the July 8, 2024, document, that Indigenous Consultants were engaged:

The city has made substantial progress towards launching the pilot project, including: ...retaining an Indigenous owned and led planning consultant, Sanala Planning, to inform all facets of the pilot project to ensure that it is culturally-appropriate and responsive to the needs of Indigenous peoples, given that this population has been significantly impacted by the three crises given the

legacy of colonialism and residential schools... the city is looking to be in a [position] to fully launch the pilot project in mid-June or early July 2024 (2024, p.96).

The July 8, 2024, City Council Workshop and the April 8, 2024, Council Meeting document proves the change was implemented by April 8, 2024, as it states there will be involvement by Indigenous representatives. The document analysis can only confirm that Indigenous perspectives are being engaged, but not if their voices and recommendations are being heard, as the final documents were not complete by the writing of this document analysis. Future research is needed to validate the incorporation of such Indigenous voices in final products for the CRPP.

Second Responders Program

The Second Responders Program was highlighted within the April 8, 2024, Council Meeting:

“THAT Council accept and approve this report titled City of New Westminster and Fraser Health Authority Second Responder Program (Post-opioid overdose follow-up program) and dated March 11, 2024” (2024, p.369). Which led to the report mentioned above which states:

The city has entered into a Common or Integrated Program Agreement with Fraser Health Authority (FHA) which will commence in March. The program will be renamed to the Second Responder program to align with a similar FHA program. This program will see Fire Department personnel:

- a) Identify people at risk of future toxic drug overdoses,
- b) Phone these people to obtain consent to meet with them, then
- c) Along with FHA staff, meet the individual to provide education, harm reduction materials and/or supporting services (Report – Fire Department, 2024, p.2).

The document proves that the Second Responders Program existed post-tawâw but not if it is what inspired the program. This is supported within a google search of the program (Fraser Health Authority, 2024). “Surrey’s own Second Responder Program, launched in 2019, has successfully connected people who use substances with support and health services.” The program was potentially inspired by Surrey’s program. tawâw has had impacts on the service delivery of the program, as supported by Participant B4 from the findings.

Missing Persons Unit

Participant V2, who mentioned the new Missing Persons Unit, was asked for supportive documents but the researcher was not provided with such documents, instead they were directed to search web platforms. The search resulted in a document from the Special City Council Meeting on November 23, 2022, which stated “...an opportunity was identified to enhance the department’s service delivery on missing persons investigations by placing them under the Special Investigations Unit [SUI]...” the document stated they would be hiring an additional FTE for the role, as “...in October 2020 the SUI began a pilot project to take on missing persons investigations...” which they claim was successful in “...resolving a number of complex missing person’s investigations” (City of New Westminster, 2022, p.25).

The decision and funding align with the same year as tawâw; with tawâw being only two months prior to the investment for a new FTE.

Additionally, The Year of Truth Journal was provided by Christina Coolidge, which was both printed and posted on New Westminster's Year of Truth website; and within the journal it stated:

The City's Indigenous Relations Advisor has noted her appreciation of the NWPDP's honest willingness to listen, learn and change. Examples of those efforts are their leadership, including the Chief of Police attending her Medicine Wheel workshop; their time spent with the city's Elder-in-Residence; their continued attendance at [tawâw]; and their participation in the city's Reconciliation Working Group. She also notes her appreciation that the department has recently made significant changes to their investigative processes in relation to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2 Spirit people; and that several NWPDP leadership attended the Spirit of the Children Society's Red Dress Day ceremony out of uniform in acknowledgement of the difficult relationship between the police and Indigenous communities, and out of respect for the trauma the uniform can often trigger for Indigenous people (Year of Truth, 2023, p.20).

The Journal makes a direct link between the Missing and Murdered investigations and tawâw; however, it also includes many other Reconciliation efforts between the Indigenous Relations Advisor and NWPDP. Thus, even though the timing aligns and there are links between the Missing Persons Unit and tawâw it is inconclusive if tawâw is impacting any policy for the Missing Persons Unit.

Honorariums

Participant C shared that current policy was being leveraged to compensate Indigenous people for additional activities beyond Committees, an email outlining the usage for staff was mentioned by Participant C, but was not forwarded to the researcher to review. A search located a Chief Administration Officer Report, from April 25, 2022, subject "Committee Remuneration Policy - Indigenous Members" and states:

The Committee Remuneration Policy – Indigenous Members... is the first of its kind in the Lower Mainland. The initial conversations regarding this policy and its companion took place at the Reconciliation, Social Inclusion and Engagement Task Force. The policy as presented to the task force was a single Committee Remuneration Policy; however, in subsequent discussions among staff in the CAO office it was determined that it would be more appropriate to have two policies that separately address the needs of these two distinct groups (City of New Westminster, 2022, p.2).

To support this, Bylaw No. 8372, 2022 states: "unless they fall into a group for which the city has a policy to compensate them for their role on a City committee such as a First Nation Rights and Title holder. Compensation will be determined by the applicable policy" (City of New Westminster, 2022).

The date of this CAO report, April 25, 2022, is aligned with claims by Participant C, who stated that honorariums are now provided for Indigenous people who come in to speak or provide other services to the city outside of committee representation. The policy pre-dates tawâw, which aligns to claims that it is being used in a new way. The timeline in conjunction with the participant comments provide validation that this policy has been influenced by tawâw; however, no supporting documentation was discovered to provide details on how it is used in this new way.

Small gas-powered equipment Metro Vancouver

For this research it was essential to review the timeline of the original discussions in order to validate that the influence from tawâw resulted in influencing policy for greater Metro Vancouver. The research and strategy on small gas-powered equipment occurred in 2024.

According to Participant Q they felt comfortable asking works-yard employees questions because of tawâw and took that to Metro Vancouver, “So we have delegated air quality regulation powers as Metro Vancouver and we were discussing how is Metro Vancouver going to engage on this? And I was more informed on what, what we actually do, like how we are actually converting over to electric.”

On Metro Vancouver’s website, it states:

Metro Vancouver is developing a regional strategy to accelerate the transition from small gas-powered equipment to emission-free alternatives... Emission-free equipment (typically electric) is growing in popularity, availability, and performance. Transitioning from small gas-powered equipment to emission-free alternatives is an important step in reducing air pollution and protecting public health. Emission-free equipment is typically quieter, and has an added benefit of reducing noise pollution (Metro Vancouver, 2024).

This coincides with Participant Q’s claim that they discussed converting to electric. This can validate the Participant’s claims, as the Participant is not taking all credit for the strategy, but merely saying they shared this information with Metro Vancouver.

Looking at all policy impacts together

The research question, “what policies are being impacted and how,” are answered and summarized in the table below:

What Policy?	Did the policy exist before or after the creation of tawâw?	Is the policy being impacted by tawâw?	How are they being impacted?
Stakeholder/rightsholder language changes	After	Yes	Discussions on stakeholder/rightsholder language have occurred at tawâw and the request to change the language was presented at tawâw, which was verified by Participants S and R2; however, the change has not been fully implemented by all City Staff.
Crisis Response Pilot Project	After	Yes	Discussions about the Crisis Response Pilot Project (CRPP) are

			<p>occurring at tawâw with influence from Christina Coolidge and Elder William. Participants claim tawâw is influencing Indigenous representation on CRPP and that documentation for CRPP has an Indigenous lens, but the documentation was not obtained. Therefore, the documentation could not be analyzed to see if it had an Indigenous Lens. Documentation could be reviewed in future research to see if recommendations from Indigenous representation were incorporated.</p>
Missing Persons Unit within NWPDP	After	Inconclusive	<p>The police investigator request was created and was passed by the New Westminister Police Board two months after the launch of tawâw. This may be in combination with other Reconciliation work done by the NWPDP and the City of New Westminister. The research cannot validate if tawâw had a direct impact on the creation of the Missing Persons Unit; however, Participant V2 claimed that tawâw is reinforcing this work and that tawâw shows them where they need to go with the work in the future. Thus, tawâw is impacting current service delivery and may</p>

			influence policies within this area in the future.
The Second Responders Program	After	No, but impact service delivery.	Participant B4 made claims that tawâw has impacted the Firefighters who are a part of The Second Responders Program in a positive way in how they interact with the public. It can be concluded that service delivery of the program has been impacted by tawâw but not the current policy itself.
Honorariums	Before	Yes	The use of the honorariums and discussions on the need for two different honorariums from the Chief Administration Officer Report (2022, p.2), aligns with the participant C's claim that tawâw impacted how the policy was used as the timeline is consistent with the claims.
Small Gas-Powered Equipment Metro Vancouver	After	Yes	The timelines of the policy discussions aligns and validates Participants Q's claim that they brought valuable information to Metro Vancouver because of tawâw. This demonstrates influence to change the small gas-

			powered equipment in Vancouver to match the preferences of works-yard staff who prefer electric powered equipment. The policy has yet to be written.
--	--	--	--

Conclusion

Participants and documentation support that tawâw had a service delivery impact and connection to the Missing Persons Unit for the New Westminster Police Department, and a noticeable service delivery impact on the language used by the Crisis Response Pilot Project, the Second Responders Program and documents pertaining the word rightsholder over the word stakeholder. Thus, answering another secondary research question: “What are the political and structural reforms taking place?” There is also a direct policy impact by tawâw on the Crisis Response Pilot Project for incorporating Indigenous voices into the project team; however, it could not be proven if those voices were heard and incorporated into final policies of the project, as they are not complete. There was a direct impact on the use of Honorariums due to tawâw and there was external policy influence by tawâw to Metro Vancouver in bringing new information for their policy development on the use of small gas-powered equipment.

The document analysis provided clarification of claims made by participants in this study. All claims of both small and big P policy existence were proven to be true. Although not all claims could be directly tied back to tawâw through the document analysis; it does not exclude that participants have stated tawâw has impacted all of the listed policies. This recognition partially answers another secondary research question: “what are the key drivers behind the political and structural reforms?” tawâw is one of those key drivers, further on this point below, in the section: “What are the key drivers behind these reforms?”

Answering part 2 of the Research Question

What relationships has tawâw impacted and how at the City of New Westminster?

Christina and Elder William have an overall influence on tawâw and bring their own Indigenous Lens to facilitating tawâw. It relates back to what Christina Coolidge said: “Relationship-building and participation is more effective than policy changing. That is Indigenous Ways of Knowing. The participatory action is making people ‘do’ to ‘learn,’ so educating people without their awareness that they’re being educated.” Christina goes on to say: “those relationships with me and Elder William are what’s important to people here and they don’t want their policies to harm me and Elder William, which then impacts policies for other Indigenous People in New Westminster” (Personal Communications, Christina Coolidge, May 23, 2024). The findings support this statement by Christina, and can be further explored from the researcher’s application of the findings within Appendix D.

The Self and The Community are interconnected, with individual motivations feeding into the growth and maintenance of the workplace community. The Self is building connection with others in their workplace community across departments during tawâw. The food-based in-person gatherings and

learning through storytelling and discussion during tawâw is creating connections that bond staff. tawâw provides a non-hierarchical, safe space where participants can be their authentic selves, removing the hierarchical structure in tawâw makes it easier for staff to connect outside of tawâw because they now know their colleagues on a personal level. Removing barriers to progress on municipal work projects can expedite completion and save taxpayer money, positively impacting The Greater Community through improved Service Delivery. The internal relationships fostered at tawâw have influenced policy work benefiting The Greater Community. tawâw builds connections with partnership by hosting partners at tawâw or delivering Bannock to the underhoused and using tawâw as an engagement tactic for project launches.

When regarding part 2 of the research question: “what relationships has tawâw impacted at the City of New Westminster and how?” The answer would be that: most, if not all, professional relationships of tawâw participants have been positively affected. These relationships have been enhanced through bonding at tawâw, enabling participants to connect more easily and regularly on work projects. This sense of community and connection has improved collaboration, ultimately benefiting work across all of New Westminster.

What are the key drivers behind these reforms?

tawâw is an Indigenous-aligned program rooted in Indigenous Knowledge and strives for Truth & Reconciliation through relationship-building and “...encourages staff to participate in a safe and casual atmosphere where they are free to be themselves” (City of New Westminster-c, 2023, p.3). tawâw’s program is intentional and guided by Indigenous Leaders at the City of New Westminster. tawâw relies on participation from its staff members to continue. Without participation the political and structural reforms occurring as a byproduct from implementing tawâw would not exist. This section will explore several key questions: What motivates the individual to attend tawâw? What motivates the community to continue tawâw? What should motivate other municipalities or organizations to implement their own tawâw if they also want to see similar benefits within their municipalities?

Motivating the individual

Looking at The Self when they enter into Community, it is connected to how participants feel; emotionally and physically. Duffy & Mair discuss the senses when experiencing community events: “In addition to the focus on the psychology of event attendance, recent studies... are opening up exciting avenues of research by turning to the senses and the ways in which our bodies capture and respond to the various elements of the community event—the sights, sounds, smells, experiences, and feelings that are aroused by participating in an event” (Connell & Gibson, 2003; Giorgi & Sassatelli, 2011; Mackley-Crump, 2015; Waitt & Duffy, 2010; as cited by Duffy, M., & Mair, 2018, p.50).

This concept of self and senses is present within tawâw’s themes of The Self: Food, Hugs and Resiliency/Healing. The combined themes are a collection of how the individual experiences tawâw and what motivates their attendance and return. Participant R2 summarized these themes when they said:

So now, for me, tawâw is nourishment. It's nourishment in the food that we get to eat... and we get to break together in that setting where we're actually sitting around having conversations individually/with [Elder William]/just catching up with [Participant G2] and stuff that maybe is going on in his life. That we don't ever take the time it seems in our very structured professional

lives to do. So, I get the nourishment from the food, but I get nourished by the relationships that I've built.

For the individual, tawâw is an experience of the senses. The taste and smell of the food, the feeling of being hugged and emotionally connected, the hearing of laughter, the sight of your Community. These senses fuel their interest in attending tawâw initially. Offering a chance for food and to commune with others brings the individual to their first session. As Participant S2 states: "Simply provide a place and food and people show up more than twice, so I've found."

Kovach talks about how important it is to connect to oneself within community: "Connecting our personal self with the community we serve is integral to an Indigenous conceptual framework. In this sense, Indigenous methodologies bind passion and purpose together through an Indigenous epistemic logic (Kuokkanen, 2007) and structure" (Kovach, 2021, p.140). The call to situate oneself is an Indigenous Worldview and is practiced by researchers who have adopted positionality statements. A summary of this worldview can be found in Downey & Harkins: "Indigenous sense of self as relational in nature and situated within one's family, one's community, and one's nation. Likewise, Wilson (2008) articulates Indigenous epistemology as based in relationship" (2019, p.242).

The relationships are a core principle of the Indigenous Worldview and has been previously categorized as the "Relational Worldview" which is organized into four directions: spirit, context, mind and body (Graham & Thomas, 2002, p.61). To expound:

On our globe today, there are two predominant worldviews—linear and relational. The linear worldview is rooted in European and mainstream American thought. It is very temporal, and it is firmly rooted in the logic that says cause has to come before effect. In contrast, the relational worldview sees life as harmonious relationships where health is achieved by maintaining balance between the many interrelating factors in one's circle of life (Cross, 1998; as cited by Graham & Thomas, 2002, p.61).

The Self helps to situate the participant in their senses. Connecting to themselves and to their surroundings is a relationship. Participants of tawâw are practicing the relational worldview:

In the relational worldview, Spirit includes spiritual practices and teachings... stories... Context includes family, culture, work, community... Mind includes intellect, emotion, memory, judgment, and experience. Body includes... nutrition... sleep and rest... and condition (Cross, 1998; as cited by Graham & Thomas, 2002, p.61).

The participants are initially attending tawâw for a meal, a key driver to all of tawâw, but they find a whole-body experience upon arrival that then nourishes them in their mind (intellect), body (nutrition), spirit (story) and context (work/community). With soup everything in your bowl is equal. The circle of the soup-bowl is the perfect symbol to the environment tawâw creates. The Indigenous circular pedagogy is well known by now (Baskin et al. 2021); equal, reciprocal, relational, holistic learning and being, and that's tawâw. "When we begin to think in circles, rather than hierarchies, we have opportunities to gain from the knowledge sharing from the best of the world's knowledges" (Baskin et al, 2021, p.68). From the mainstream perspective this is simply a worker eating a bowl of soup, but from the Indigenous Worldview even at the individual participant level this is a relationship that begins with a bowl of soup.

Motivating the Community

Studies have demonstrated that food creates community, Purnell & Jenkins state that: "...food serves to build a sense of community via (a) open invitation and (b) shared storytelling" (2013, p.2). Katz found that the experience of communing transcends that of the individual: "The communal meals transform the moment into something more unique and meaningful. Those who participate become part of something greater than themselves as individuals" (2012, p.36). This was apparent in the findings, that participants wanted to return to be a part of The Community that tawâw offered and to listen and share their stories. Participants choose to attend the Indigenous-aligned program where they interact with staff, often from other departments. The participants are the "co-creators of value" for their community and its membership (Luo et al., 2016, p.673). They need to attend to contribute to the value the community holds by bringing themselves, knowledge and their stories. Without attendance, without stories, no community would exist.

tawâw has created a community identity, which derives from social identity "... and [s]ocial identity is defined as an individual's recognition of own membership of a social organization, involving value and emotional connotation" (Tajfel, 1981; as cited by, Luo et al., 2016, p.673-674). The participant's personal recognition of their membership is based on value and connection. It begins with The Self and their own motivation to attend, but the individual needs connection and relationship to be motivated to return to the community. Initial community-based motivation to attend tawâw is created by the non-hierarchical space, one where staff can be their authentic selves and feel safe: "...a rich and successful organizational culture is one into which members bring their real selves" (Barth, 2003, p.3). That safe space and choice are impacts of tawâw at The Community level, but they become motivations and drivers for participants to return to community. Participatory action/storytelling, building-relationships/silo-breaking, and the sense of community are the impacts experienced by participants, but they become new motivations for continued attendance once realized.

"[Christina] Coolidge says the point [of tawâw] is for everyone to find a creative, unifying way forward when it comes to truth and reconciliation" (Renouf, 2022-b). The program, tawâw, always had a purpose and direction. Christina and Elder William use participatory action to facilitate that direction, and the participants are invested in this direction. "Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (Wenger et. al, 2002, p. 4; as cited by Cairns & Malloch, 2011, p.6). This aligns to tawâw. It is a group of people who interact every Wednesday who hold a mutual passion about the Indigenous Knowledge being shared and they continue to deepen their knowledge by meeting together to discuss the topics brought by Christina or Elder William. Topics are not exclusive to Indigenous Knowledge, but the practice of storytelling, communing and sharing is making the participants learn by way of practice even when the topics are not wholly Indigenous.

Participants have stated, they have been learning from the stories and discussing Indigenous topics at tawâw. "Story is a practice in Indigenous cultures that sustains communities, validates experiences and epistemologies, expresses experiences of Indigenous peoples, and nurtures relationships and the sharing of knowledge" (Iseke, 2013, p.599). Participants are actively contributing to the community by sharing their own stories, and listening to colleagues tell their stories, which was not an initial motivation. The motivation to attend was the soup and Bannock, but the experience of learning and storytelling became a motivation to become part of the community. "When we succeed in unlocking the power of storytelling in our organizations, we also deepen and strengthen the relationship between the tellers and the listeners" (Barth, 2003, p.3). The relationships and knowledge sharing were motivations for

participants to continue to attend tawâw, “It is in participation with others that we come into a sense of self,” The Self and The Community rely on each other (Brown, 2001).

Christina Coolidge and Elder William were consistently discussed as the visionaries and leaders of tawâw, closely linked to its outcomes and motivations. Parker et. al conducted research of a Community of Practice on teachers. Findings supported the importance of catalysts at the beginning, but once motivated, participants were empowered to continue the work regardless of the catalysts (Parker et. al, 2010, p.355). This framing of catalyst, motivation, and empowerment were also present in tawâw with Christina Coolidge being the catalyst, or the ‘spark’ that ignited it all. This is confirmed in media reports on the creation of tawâw (Renouf 2022-b); as well as the theme: Impacts of Christina/Elder William. Moving from motivation to empowerment was the final phase, which was demonstrated within observational data and personal communications: that a committee of volunteers now help run tawâw during Christina’s absence (Personal Communications, Christina Coolidge, Sept.11, 2024). This phase of empowerment was confirmed by participant S2, within the Sense of Community theme when they stated “The, the fact that the organization is now just, you know, taking it away from Christina and it's theirs, which I know she has always said 'holy smokes. That would just be like that would be sort of the top level' and it's happened, and it happened so quickly.” These points form the conclusion that tawâw has moved from catalyst through motivation and into empowerment. Christina Coolidge was a key driver in the creation of tawâw and her work empowered the community to continue the program in her absence. This should not be confused with the ongoing presence of Indigenous Knowledge and storytelling by Elder William, who is a key driver for continued success of the community.

Participant S1 states: “One motivation for me was definitely to do something in community with my coworkers...as staff, we've shared meals together before, but it hasn't been, it hasn't felt so community oriented like it does at tawâw.” tawâw is a Community of Practice that continues to perpetuate shared learning and authentic relationship-building amongst its staff in a way that motivates participation. It is through the freedom to share, listen and learn from story in tawâw’s non-hierarchical safe-space that participants have built their community, making these motivations to return to community additional key drivers to success. The attendees of tawâw want to be themselves, share themselves, learn and participate as a community over a bowl of soup; that is tawâw’s community identity; it is safe, relational, emotional and nourishing.

Motivating the workplace and why other organizations should partake

tawâw is a Community of Practice that motivates continued interaction amongst City Staff of various departments. “Interaction is a crucial means of establishing and maintaining relationships with others in the workplace, but, importantly, it is also a means of learning how to become a well-integrated member of the workplace community” (Holmes, 2015, p.1). If organizations are looking to bolster workplace community, then programming that motivates staff to gather regularly can build that community and positive workplace culture. “A positive workplace culture encompasses a range of components that foster a harmonious and productive working atmosphere... to create a workplace where employees can thrive, grow, and contribute positively to the organization’s success” (Radu, 2023). A sense of community within the workplace benefits both the individual and the organization: “[a] sense of community at work benefits both individuals—by offering the experience of belonging rather than alienation at work—and organizations— which benefit from the increased contribution of their members” (Dutton & Ragins, 2007). If participants are returning to the workplace to spend time together it can create new projects and collectives and result in resourcing more efficiently (Zhen, 2024, p.575-576). tawâw creates an

opportunity for silo-breaking and builds the sense of community creating time for new discoveries and discussions.

“Informal workplace social networks influence a broad range of important outcomes for employees, including their performance and career progression” (Brass, 1984; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001; as cited by Venkataramani, et al., 2013, p.1). The willingness to participate in tawâw, given it is a wholly in-person and participatory experience, is of importance given the professional environment we now see with the rise of the work-from-home landscape. Work-from-home can increase silos within the workplace (Yang, et al., 2022) and employers continue to fear the consequences of at-home-work in areas of innovation/creativity, mentorship (Tahlyan et al., 2024, p.1), and silo-building (Edwards, 2020, p.1). Finding programs, such as those of tawâw, that draw employees to the workplace where innovation/creativity, mentorship and silo-breaking can flourish is of interest to employers. Participants reported that they not only enjoy attending tawâw but have adjusted their work-from-home arrangements to be present during the program. A program that significantly influences individuals to prefer being at work over home is one that all organizations should consider learning from.

Organizations have vested interest in retaining employees. A positive workplace culture with a focus on relationships can aid in retainment (Sheridan, 1992, p.1051). Employee commitment not only aids in retention, but encourages high performance (Andrew, 2017). tawâw's Community of Practice has fostered relationships across various departments which has helped to break silos. The silo-breaking and new collaboration opportunities created impacts in ways of policy influence and positive Service Delivery influence, indicating there is a positive impact on performance due to the creation of tawâw. “Globally, there seems to be a performance crisis in public service, as there is need to produce more for less” (Nabukeera M, Ali B, Raja NB, 2015, p. 2; as cited by Andrew 2017). Productive work culture comes from building positive workplace relationships (Barth, 2003). Case study research suggests that “...communities of practice play an important role in influencing the relational dimension within an organization” (Lesser & Storck, 2001, p.834) and “...communities of practice serve as generators for social capital. This social capital, in turn, creates an environment in which business performance is positively impacted” (Lesser & Storck, 2001, p.833). Consequently, it is not only relationships but learning that can impact commitment and job performance “...there is a relationship between organizational learning organizational commitment, job satisfaction and work performance” (Rose et al., 2009, p.1).

tawâw created opportunities for policy and Service Delivery impacts on the City of New Westminster, by using Indigenous approaches to learning and relationship-building, resulting in a positive workplace community and culture that increased employee commitment. This commitment resulted in frequent return to the workplace, making the in-person experience a key driver to the success.

Conclusion

A Workplace community, such as the Community of Practice that is present at tawâw, can boost participation, commitment, and a positive workplace culture. Implementing a Community of Practice that is Indigenous-aligned can be particularly beneficial, as Indigenous Worldviews are inherently cyclical and relational. This interconnected approach can positively impact organizational performance by fostering a supportive and collaborative environment. This study identified key motivations for participation, under The Self and The CoP. Of most importance were the key drivers of: Food/communing, learning/storytelling, and relationship-building in a non-hierarchical safe space.

Additional key drivers were Christina Coolidge initially, and Elder William continually, as well as tawâw being in-person only. Organizations can learn from programming like tawâw and leverage these motivations and key drivers to enhance their own workplace communities, so they can in turn, increase employee relationships and commitment, which can impact job satisfaction and performance.

Answering additional Secondary Research Questions

How has tawâw strengthened reconciliation and decolonization goals?

To maintain scope this researcher only considered how tawâw specifically impacted reconciliation and decolonizing goals by reviewing the 94 Calls to Action and the fourth “recommendations for reconciliation” endorsed by Council in New Westminster:

- That the City of New Westminster support, through funding and other tangible resourcing, a community-led process of reconciliation that would include forums and dialogue, Indigenous led events and actions, and other creative and civic minded actions that demonstrate the spirit and principles of reconciliation (Nakagawa, 2017, p.10).
- #57 from the CTA: We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2015-a).

Both instances have been validated through the participants of tawâw as well as the document analysis of this report. tawâw is an Indigenous led event/action that is driven by reconciliation efforts. It provides education to public servants through the participatory action led by Christina Coolidge and Elder William which has impacted policy and Service Delivery.

Have other Western city administrations, similar in size to New Westminster, (BC, AB, SK, MB) conducted similar programs to tawâw?

A media analysis was conducted to review if other Western provinces were conducting similar Indigenous-aligned programs for City Staff, view full search strings in Appendix E. The first search was a simple search on the word tawâw, which revealed other works such as a cookbook, a housing project for Indigenous people and a new school in Regina bestowed with its name (Brehaut, 2019; McDermott, 2024; Kurz, 2024). None of which are related to the program of tawâw happening at the City of New Westminster, of value was the quote “The meaning of tawâw (a Cree word pronounced ta-WOW) — there is room, you are welcome... You are welcome to be with me any time. My home is yours. My friendship is yours. My culture is yours” (Brehaut, 2019).

The next set of search strings focused on training for municipalities and resulted in 3 Western municipalities that had discussed Indigenous focused trainings facilitated for City Staff: Calgary, Vancouver, and Winnipeg. While other articles indicate a different approach for Saskatchewan. Training searches demonstrated that Treaties were being taught now in the public-school curriculum:

There is no other province that mandates the education system to have treaty education within the classroom, and such an important step because then young people are introduced to

treaties early on. As they mature and learn more than it puts everybody in a better place of knowledge and accepting of who we are as a people, Mirasty said (McNeil, 2024).

Additionally, Regina has taken an embedded approach to an Indigenous Framework within the municipality:

The City of Regina is proposing to create a focused organizational framework to better include Indigenous voices and knowledge into city services moving forward... The intent of developing an Indigenous Framework is to establish a roadmap, along with tools and processes, to better incorporate Indigenous perspectives into the city's decision-making processes (Kurz, 2023).

The initiatives taken by the municipalities above do not demonstrate a similar approach as *tawâw*, as none of them mention communing nor the incorporation of Elders with the work, except for Calgary, AB, which was not an ongoing program, but arranged sporadically. These findings do not indicate it is not occurring, simply, that further research would be needed to prove it.

The closest program related to *tawâw* was in Victoria, B.C., where: "The [City Family] refers to a local group that is working on reconciliation with Indigenous people. It includes members of the Esquimalt and Songhees nations, City Councillors and non-Indigenous community members" (Dehaas, 2018). The City Family proved to be a contentious topic with taxpayers, but incorporated communing together regularly and partaking in food:

But Coun. Ben Isitt said he's learning that Indigenous traditions support the idea that meeting participants "break some bread together" before getting on with important work. He noted, for instance, that every meeting of the City Family, which includes councillors as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous appointees, begins with catered food (Kines, 2020).

As previously mentioned, many taxpayers were displeased with the City Family and Mayor at the time, Lisa Helps (Dehaas, 2018); yet, the work also created permanent change, such as "relocating the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald" a known pioneer for the Residential School System (Stanley, 2019, p.89), or as many people know it "Genocide by [another] name" (Churchill, 2004, 78-115).

The media analysis can conclude that if there are similar programs or trainings to *tawâw* occurring at other municipalities they are not being reported on. The closest being Victoria's City Family, which was not well received. Have other Western city administrations, similar in size to New Westminster, (BC, AB, SK, MB) conducted similar programs to *tawâw*? Further analysis would benefit the future of this research question and should include a review of other forms of data collection beyond media, such as Council Meetings and surveys to other municipalities. This review should examine whether the key drivers of *tawâw*'s program are present: a non-hierarchical safe-space, Indigenous leadership, storytelling, communal eating and if it has in-person interaction.

Limitations of Analysis and Areas for Further Research

One of the limitations of the analysis was the limitlessness of grounded-theory. tawâw proved to be an expansive topic with layered findings. Maintaining scope to meet graduation deadlines prevented the researcher from making connections to the additional Reconciliation work happening at the City of New Westminster, beyond tawâw. This is an opportunity for additional research in this area.

Another time-based limitation of the analysis was that change within Public Administration can be slow, as mentioned by participant H1: "A year is not very long in terms of policymaking in a government." Data collection for this research was only 5 months. Change in policy can take years and there is an opportunity to continue the research on the policy impacts where this research leaves off. Were the policies successful? Can the Indigenous Lens on the policy work be pinpointed? Were the recommendations from Indigenous voices incorporated into the actual policy document? These questions could not be answered within this study.

An additional limitation of the analysis is even though the researcher is external to the City of New Westminster, they became a participant themselves and became invested in the program of tawâw, found in Appendix D. This was always the intention but can be perceived as a limitation due to perceived bias from relationship-building. The relationships that grew out of this research was based on respect, reciprocity and hope. The client could veto anything they were uncomfortable with if the researcher was doing anything that could cause them harm personally or professionally, but that is the case for all participants, as is the purpose of ethics approvals. At this time, there has yet to be any vetoed work by the client, but still would be respected if requested.

Finally, additional research would benefit this area of study on other municipalities to evaluate if they've implemented similar programs to tawâw and if those programs have been successful in policy and relationship impacts in the same way tawâw has had on New Westminster.

Recommendations

Within the recommendations section the research endeavours to answer one final secondary research question: How can programs similar to tawâw be adopted within other municipalities? What are the challenges they may encounter as they are rolled out?

With respect to Indigenous approaches: it should be emphasized that it is not a one-size-fits-all approach. As Christina Coolidge shared: “I’m not sure you can replicate the perfect storm of tawâw” (Personal Communications, May 2, 2024). This research demonstrated that there is value in implementing Indigenous knowledges and teachings into a professional setting, in this case a colonial setting, and it benefited workplace performance, employee engagement and relationship building both internal and external. While replicating the program could be challenging, learning from it is not.

tawâw has created employee motivation and engagement and has had impacts at the Individual, Community and Greater Community levels. Findings suggest there was a service delivery impact from the implementation of tawâw on projects, programs and policies at the City of New Westminster. The research discovered that tawâw is a Community of Practice that boosts employee engagement and creates a positive work culture. This culture was developed through the use of Food and Communing and Indigenous learning/storytelling in an in-person only, non-hierarchical safe space. tawâw is a place where employees feel free of judgement which has led to positive relationship-building and silo-breaking that has benefited work related projects. Finally, the Indigenous leaders of tawâw, Christina Coolidge and Elder William, have been critical to the creation and sustainment of tawâw. They heed that relationship-building is more important than policymaking, and the research suggests the latter is a by-product of relationship-building. Relationship-building went beyond the walls of City Hall and connected with residents, partners and the unhoused. With that, there are six recommendations that have developed from this study that other municipalities can learn from:

- 1. Hiring an Indigenous Relations Team**

An Indigenous Advisor and Elder orchestrated and led tawâw and brought in Indigenous knowledge. They are needed for the success of the program. Organizations and municipalities can benefit from bringing in an Indigenous perspective to their workplace and policies by hiring Indigenous Relations Teams/Team members. This research has demonstrated the value that came from hiring an Indigenous Relations Advisor, and providing them with the autonomy to implement an Indigenous-aligned program and make decisions about the program.

- 2. Cross-departmental Community of Practice**

Implementing a cross-departmental Community of Practice for employees that is Indigenous-led can be beneficial, as Indigenous Worldviews are inherently cyclical and relational. This interconnected approach can positively impact organizational performance by fostering a supportive and collaborative environment centered around relationship-building.

- 3. Weekly meetings with an Elder**

Connecting with an Elder and gaining Indigenous knowledge improved service delivery at the City of New Westminster. Employees can benefit from meeting with an Elder weekly for *storytelling* and Indigenous teachings.

4. **Multi-year contract for Indigenous Employees**

Policy was also influenced by the hiring of an Indigenous Relations Advisor, but impacts took over two years to see from the start of tawâw. Therefore, any implementation of Indigenous knowledge or influence must be supported by a multi-year contract.

5. **In-person communal gatherings for employees**

Staff and workplace culture can benefit from communing together in a safe, non-hierarchical space, where staff can bring their authentic selves. It is highly recommended that gatherings maintain a consistent schedule, be in-person and include communal eating. The elements of storytelling and sharing are also important elements during these sessions.

6. **Communal gatherings to connect with partners and residents**

In-person gatherings with communal eating were not only beneficial for employees, but was also beneficial for relationship-building with partners, residents and the unhoused community. Communal eating is highly recommended as a powerful engagement tool for organizations to foster connection and collaboration in the future.

Organizations are encouraged to consider adopting the aforementioned recommendations and to build initiatives similar to tawâw, so they too can reap the benefits of a motivated and engaged workforce that places relationships at the centre.

Next Steps

For Municipalities

Municipalities outside of New Westminster must discover next steps for themselves as every Indigenous community within their municipality will require tailored needs. A good first step would be to hire an Indigenous Relations Team. Next is to trust your Indigenous Relations Team to evaluate the program needs for their area and provide them with the autonomy to make decisions for their programs. Municipalities ought to set funding aside for reconciliation and training efforts for the organization, which should include a budget for food, like soup and Bannock.

For all organizations

Storytelling and relationship building is an Indigenous ontology that everyone can learn and benefit from. Set budget aside to organize a Community of Practice that offers food and storytelling to support relationship building. The relationship building will break silos and create efficiencies for work related projects.

Create a safe-space where staff can set their titles aside, introducing themselves by name rather than work title. This practice should include leadership doing the same, which will foster an environment where authenticity can thrive.

For New Westminster

During this research there were opportunities that were discovered specific to the City of New Westminster and their program, relationships and policies. Opportunities for consideration are:

- Supplement funding to the Indigenous Relations Team to extend the Elder-in-Residence program and add additional team members to support tawâw and internal Indigenous Staff.
- Conduct a holistic evaluation of Truth & Reconciliation work done by the City of New Westminster.
- Fully implement the change of the stakeholder/rightsholder language use.
- Once fully realized, research the impacts of the Crisis Response Pilot Project, the Second Responders Program, and The Missing Persons Unit within the NRPD.
- Bolster external engagement opportunities for tawâw, similar to the opening of tәмәsewtxʷ.

Conclusion

This research highlights the profound impacts of tawâw on individuals, the collective, and the broader community. The findings of this study reveal the layered motivations and impacts of tawâw, captured within three nested circles: The Self, The Community, and The Greater Community. Initially driven by food, participants return for the emotional nourishment provided by hugs and healing, which strengthens The Self. The in-person and non-hierarchical safe-space of tawâw fosters storytelling and learning, which has resulted in relationship-building and silo-breaking, ultimately creating a sense of community. This intentionally inclusive and secure environment cultivates relationships that extend beyond tawâw and enhances collaboration on work-related projects. These impacts become new motivations for continued attendance of tawâw.

For the Greater Community, while residents of New Westminster may not initially seek out tawâw, they are impacted by service delivery and policies that have been influenced by tawâw; such as, the Missing Persons Unit at the New Westminster Police Department, the policy on Honorariums, the Crisis Response Pilot Project and the Second Responders Program, and the change in documentation on the word stakeholder. Impacts have extended beyond the City of New Westminster, now influencing external policies in Metro Vancouver.

Christina Coolidge and Elder William bring their Indigenous Lens to tawâw, emphasizing a cyclical and Relational Worldview that focuses on relationship-building, storytelling and participation over policy changes, yet policy impacts are a result of implementing the Relational Worldview. Their influence supports the notion that participatory action and relationship-building fosters trust and empathy among government workers, which builds strong internal relationships. Future research could explore additional factors influencing participation and commitment, as well as the long-term impacts of such programs on organizational success. Additionally, the incorporation of Indigenous Voice and Lens into formal policies and documents.

Other municipalities can learn from tawâw to embed Indigenous perspectives within colonial structures, creating community and developing impacts for City Staff. All organizations are encouraged to adopt similar initiatives to benefit from a motivated and engaged workforce similar to the one tawâw has created. The relationships within tawâw fosters knowledge sharing, breaks silos, enriches resiliency, and ultimately impacts society through the efforts of two incredible Indigenous Leaders: Christina Coolidge and Elder William.

In closing, Elder William shares:

Stepping into unknown waters ripples from the steps to Soup and Bannock. The fountain is made from each individual's unique flavor of life. Soup and Bannock nourishes the body and warms our hearts. This Oldtimer sits within the healing of the heart. Darkness of the world is ever present. However, when no one is watching, Soup and Bannock does its magic and lights our hopes.

References

- Alcantara, C., & Nelles, J. (2016). *A quiet evolution: the emergence of Indigenous-local intergovernmental partnerships in Canada*. University of Toronto Press.
- Andrew, A. (2017). Employees' commitment and its impact on organizational performance. *Asian Journal of Economics, Business and Accounting*, 5(2),
- Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216-224.
- Asadullah, M. (2021). Decolonization and Restorative Justice: A Proposed Theoretical Framework. *Decolonization of Criminology and Justice*, 3(1), 27-62.
- Assembly, U. G. (2007). United Nations declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples. *UN Wash*, 12, 1-18.
- A Year of Truth. (2023). A Year of Truth. *New Westminster*. <https://yearoftruth.ca/>
- Barker, A. J. (2015). 'A direct act of resurgence, a direct act of sovereignty': Reflections on idle no more, Indigenous activism, and Canadian settler colonialism. *Globalizations*, 12(1), 43-65.
- Barth, R. S. (2003). *Lessons learned: Shaping relationships and the culture of the workplace*. Corwin Press.
- Bartlett, C., Marshall, M., & Marshall, A. (2012). Two-eyed seeing and other lessons learned within a co-learning journey of bringing together Indigenous and mainstream knowledges and ways of knowing. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, 2(4), 331-340. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13412-012-0086-8>
- Baskin, C. Y. N. D. Y., & Cornacchia, C. A. S. S. A. N. D. R. A. (2021). Classrooms as circles: The pedagogy of sharing Indigenous worldviews. *Teaching social work: reflections on pedagogy and practice*, 68-81.
- Bear, L. L. (2000). Jagged worldviews colliding. *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision*, 77, 85-108.
- Beaudoin, G. (2017). Drybones Case. In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/drybones-case-1970>
- Black, K., & McBean, E. (2017). Analysis of challenges and opportunities to meaningful Indigenous engagement in sustainable water and wastewater management. *Water Policy*, 19(4), 709-723.
- Boldt, M., & Long, J. (1984). Tribal Traditions and European-Western Political Ideologies: The Dilemma of Canada's Native Indians. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue Canadienne De Science Politique*, 17(3), 537-553. doi:10.1017/S0008423900031905
- Borovoy, A. A. (1973). Civil Liberties in the Imminent Hereafter. *Can. B. Rev.*, 51, 93.
- Botha, L. (2012). Mixing methods as a process towards Indigenous methodologies. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 14(4), 313-325. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2010.516644>
- Brascoupé, S. & Waters, C. (2009). Cultural safety: Exploring the applicability of the concept of cultural safety to Aboriginal health and community wellness. *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, 5(2), 6-41.
- Brehaut, L. (2019, October 24). You are welcome, there is room: In Tawâw, Enoch Cree chef Shane M. Chartrand charts his Alberta upbringing and unique culinary style. *National Post*. Retrieved from <https://nationalpost.com/life/food/you-are-welcome-there-is-room-in-tawaw-enoch-cree-chef-shane-m-chartrand-charts-his-alberta-upbringing-and-unique-culinary-style>
- Brown, J. S. (2004). *Storytelling: Scientist's Perspective: Storytelling passport to the 21st century*. Retrieved from <http://www.creatingthe21stcentury.org/jsb5-descartes.html>
- Buric, S. (2023). Achieving Reconciliation: An Analysis on Policies Affecting the Indigenous Peoples

- of Canada.
- Cairns, H. A. C. (1966). A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: A Report on Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies, Vol. I.
- Castro, A. P., & Nielsen, E. (2001). Indigenous people and co-management: implications for conflict management. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 4(4-5), 229-239.
- Cavalluzzo, P. (1971). Judicial Review and the Bill of Rights: Drybones and Its Aftermath. *Osgoode Hall LJ*, 9, 511.
- Churchill, W. (2004). Genocide by any other name: North American Indian Residential Schools in context. *Genocide, war crimes and the west: History and Complicity*, 78-115.
- City of New Westminster. (2023-a). Truth Before Reconciliation: Our Journey. *Year of Truth*. <https://yearoftruth.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/CityofNewWest-YearofTruth-Journal-2023.pdf>
- City of New Westminster. (2023-b). City Council Meeting Agenda. *City of New Westminster*. Retrieved from: <https://pub-newwestcity.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=19104>
- City of New Westminster. (2023-c). Retrieved from: <https://pub-newwestcity.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=12353>
- City of New Westminster. (2024). Facilities Asset Management Plan. Retrieved from: https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/CNW_DOCS_2466239_v1_ENG_2024_CBP_FAMP_2024_Final_Endorsed_by_Council.pdf
- Cornell, S. (2007). Remaking the tools of governance: Colonial legacies, Indigenous solutions. *Rebuilding Native nations: Strategies for governance and development*.
- Deer, K. (2023, April 18). Advocates call on Canada to establish multi-year funding for Indigenous youth organizations. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/indigenous-youth-funding-report-1.6813386>
- Dehaas, J. (2018, August 29). Victoria mayor sorry some felt 'excluded' in removal of John A. Macdonald statue. *CTV News*. Retrieved from <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/article/victoria-mayor-sorry-some-felt-excluded-in-removal-of-john-a-macdonald-statue>
- Department of Justice. (2017). Realizing a Nation-to-Nation Relationship with the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. *Government of Canada*. https://www.canada.ca/en/department-justice/news/2017/07/realizing_a_nation-to-nationrelationshipwiththeindigenouspeoples.html
- Department of Justice. (2023). Understanding the Overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the Criminal Justice System. *Government of Canada*. <https://www.justice.gc.ca/socjs-esjp/en/ind-aut/uo-cs>
- Dopely Colors. (2022). **Free Speech Red** #CF0107. *Dopely*. <https://colors.dopely.top/color-pedia/cf0107>
- Drawson, A. S., Toombs, E., & Mushquash, C. J. (2017). Indigenous research methods: A systematic review. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 8(2).
- Duffy, M., & Mair, J. (2018). Engaging the senses to explore community events. *Event Management*, 22(1), 49-63.
- Dutton, J. E., & Ragins, B. R. (2007). *Exploring positive relationships at work: building a theoretical and research foundation*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dyck, N., & Sadik, T. (2020). Indigenous Political Organization and Activism in Canada. In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from

- <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-people-political-organization-and-activism>
- Edwards, S. (2020). How to encourage collaboration and break down silos in remote teams? *Strategic HR Review*, 19(4), 157–158. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SHR-05-2020-0043>
- Encyclopedia, T. (2022). Indian Act. In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indian-act>
- Ens, A. (2021). *Disrupting the academy: how we move from mere Indigenous inclusion to decolonization indigenization* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Lethbridge (Canada)).
- Fawcett, R. B., Walker, R., & Greene, J. (2015). Indigenizing city planning processes in Saskatoon, Canada. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 24(2), 158-175.
- First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC). (2014). Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP®): The Path to First Nations Information Governance.
- Fleras, A., & Maaka, R. 2010. Indigeneity-Grounded Analysis (IGA) as Policy(-Making) Lens: New Zealand Models, Canadian Realities. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 1(1).
- Forrester, B. (2023, February 6). *Feds unable to list Indigenous communities consulted on reconciliation council bill*. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/reconciliation-council-c29-list-1.6736579>
- Fraser Basin Council. (2006). 2006 State of the Fraser Basin Report: Sustainability Snapshot 3. Fraser Basin Council.
- Fraser Health Authority. March 20, 2024. “City of New Westminster and Fraser Health launch new toxic drug response program.” *Fraser Health Authority*. Retrieved from: <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/news/2024/Mar/City-of-New-Westminster-and-Fraser-Health-launch-new-toxic-drug-response-program#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThe%20launch%20of%20the%20Second,to%20the%20health%20care%20system>.
- Fridkin, A. J. (2016). *First Nations involvement in health policy decision-making: The paradox of meaningful involvement* (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).
- Galois, R. M. (1992). The Indian Rights Association, Native Protest Activity and the 'Land Question' in British Columbia, 1903–1916. *Native Studies Review*, 8(2), 1.
- George, C. T. (2019). Decolonize, then indigenize: Critical insights on decolonizing education and Indigenous resurgence in Canada. *Antistasis*, 9(1), 73-95.
- Giles, A., Fanning, L., Denny, S., & Paul, T. (2016). Improving the American eel fishery through the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge into policy level decision making in Canada. *Human Ecology : An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 44(2), 167-183.
- Goodminds. (2022). Free Resource 13 Moons on Turtle's Back (Info and Cut-Outs Books). *Goodminds.com*. Retrieved from: <https://goodminds.com/blogs/news/free-resource-13-moons-on-turtles-back-info-and-cut-outs-books>
- Government of Canada-a. (2023, September 22). *Developing laws and regulations for First Nations drinking water and wastewater: engagement 2022 to 2023*. Government of Canada. <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1330528512623/1698157290139>
- Government of Canada-b. (2023, November 15). *Government of Canada and the duty to consult*. Government of Canada. <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1331832510888/1609421255810>
- Graham, K. A. (2015). The paradox of participation: an overview of public participation and local government in Canada. *Citizen participation at the local level in China and Canada*, 13-30.
- Graham, T. L., & Thomas, L. (2002). *Using reasons for living to connect to American Indian healing*

- traditions*. *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 29(1), 55-77. <https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.2787>
- Grain, K. (2023). What We See as One River is a Convergence of Many: Three Convergence Commitments in University Teaching. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education*, 18(2), 24-36.
- Grattan, M. (2023, July 25). *Governments are failing to share decision-making with Indigenous people, Productivity Commission finds*. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/governments-are-failing-to-share-decision-making-with-Indigenous-people-productivity-commission-finds-210392>
- Harris, A. (2015). Looking into the Empty Box: A Study of the Formation of Indigenous Subjects in Liberal Policy Settings through the Case of the European Union's Sealskin Ban.
- Harris, C. (2012). The Native Land Policies of Governor James Douglas. *BC Studies: The British Columbian Quarterly*, (174), 101-122. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10745-016-9814-0>
- Harris, L. D., & Wasilewski, J. (2004). Indigeneity, an alternative worldview: Four R's (relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, redistribution) vs. two P's (power and profit). Sharing the journey towards conscious evolution. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science: The Official Journal of the International Federation for Systems Research*, 21(5), 489-503.
- Hayward, A., Sjoblom, E., Sinclair, S., & Cidro, J. (2021). A new era of Indigenous research: Community-based Indigenous research ethics protocols in Canada. *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics*, 16(4), 403-417.
- Held, M. (2019). Decolonizing research paradigms in the context of settler colonialism: an unsettling, mutual, and collaborative effort. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18, 160940691882157. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918821574>
- Helin, C. (2014). Dances with dependency: Out of poverty through self-reliance. *Open Road Media*.
- Heritz, J. (2018). From self-determination to service delivery: Assessing Indigenous inclusion in municipal governance in Canada. *Canadian Public Administration*, 61(4), 596-615.
- Hernandez, J., & Vogt, K. (2020). Indigenizing Restoration: Indigenous Lands before Urban Parks. *Human Biology*. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hub.2017.0084>
- Herzog, L. S., Wright, S. R., Pennington, J. J., & Richardson, L. (2021). The KAIROS Blanket Exercise: Engaging Indigenous ways of knowing to foster critical consciousness in medical education. *Medical Teacher*, 43(12), 1437-1443.
- Hessing, M. B. (1984). *Production of the public voice: public participation in the hearing process as contemporary democracy* (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).
- Hobson, B. (2022, September 21). More than half the children in care are Indigenous, census data suggests. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/census-indigenous-children-care-1.6590075>
- Holmes, J. (2015). Making Transitions: The Role of Interaction in Joining a Workplace Community of Practice. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, 9(2), 77-92.
- Ibrahima, A. and Kelly, B. (2021). Indigenous methods and knowledge: maternal health policy and practice in Ethiopia, Africa. *International Social Work*, 66(4), 1222-1239 <https://doi.org/10.1177/00208728211008961>
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. (2010). A History of Treat-Making in Canada. *Government of Canada*. <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/assets/docs/iminds/war-smoking-pipe-treaty-making.pdf>
- Indigenous Watchdog. (2023, February 14). *Indigenous People are being short-changed by the*

- Government's plans to improve Canada's health care system*. Indigenous Watchdog. <https://www.indigenousswatchdog.org/2023/02/14/indigenous-people-are-being-short-changed-by-the-governments-plans-to-improve-canadas-health-care-system/>
- Indigenous Services Canada. (2022). Eighth Annual (2022) Statutory Report Pursuant to Section 2 of the Indian Act Amendment and Replacement Act, Statutes of Canada, Chapter 38, 2014. *Government of Canada*. <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1643829194000/1643829226673>
- Indigenous Services Canada. (2010). Publications of historical interest. *Government of Canada*. <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100010186/1590587767875>
- Indigenous People and Reconciliation. (2023-a). Indigenous Engagement. *New Westminster*. <https://www.newwestcity.ca/indigenous-engagement>
- Indigenous People and Reconciliation. (2023-b). Indigenous Rights and Reconciliation. *New Westminster*. https://www.newwestcity.ca/truth-and-reconciliation-calls-to-action/sb_expander_articles/2552.php
- Indigenous People and Reconciliation. (2023-c). Indigenous People and Reconciliation. *New Westminster* https://www.newwestcity.ca/indigenous_reconciliation
- Iseke, J. (2013). Indigenous storytelling as research. *International review of qualitative research*, 6(4), 559-577.
- Jackie Traverse.(2025). Prayers for Turtle Island. *The Indigenous Collection*. Retrieved from: <https://theindigenouscollection.com/products/prayers-for-turtle-island-9-x-6-art-card>
- Katz, R. (2012). Passing the salt: How eating together creates community.
- Kines, L. (2020, January 18). 2 Victoria councillors try to end free lunches for themselves; they are outvoted. *Times Colonist*. Retrieved from <https://www.timescolonist.com/local-news/2-victoria-councillors-try-to-end-free-lunches-for-themselves-they-are-outvoted-4678484>
- Kim, J. J. (2014). They made us unrecognizable to each other: Human rights, truth, and reconciliation in Canada.
- Kovach, M. (2010). Conversation method in Indigenous research. *First peoples child & family review*, 5(1), 40-48.
- Kovach, M. (2021). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts*. University of Toronto press.
- Kurz, L. (2023, October 2). City of Regina considering developing an Indigenous Framework. *Leader-Post*.
- Kurz, L. (2024, June 28). North Regina joint-use school to be named St. Raphael, Tawâw School. *Leader-Post*. Retrieved from <https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/north-regina-joint-use-school-to-be-named-st-raphael-tawaw-school>
- Kwantlen First Nation. (2025). Stalew Pow Wow and Walk in the Spirit of Reconciliation. *Kwantlen First Nation*.
- Kwikwetlem First Nation. (2025). Annual report. *Kwikwetlem First Nation*.
- Lagace, N., & Sinclair, N. (2020). The White Paper, 1969. In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-white-paper->
- Leslie, J. (2016). Indigenous Suffrage. In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indigenous-suffrage>
- Lesser, E. L., & Storck, J. (2001). Communities of practice and organizational performance. *IBM systems journal*, 40(4), 831-841.
- Library of Parliament (2019). The Duty to Consult Indigenous Peoples. Retrieved from: https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/201917E

- Long, J. A. (1990). Political Revitalization in Canadian Native Indian Societies. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 23(4), 751–773. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423900020837>
- Luo, N., Zhang, M., Hu, M., & Wang, Y. (2016). How community interactions contribute to harmonious community relationships and customers' identification in online brand community. *International Journal of Information Management*, 36(5), 673-685.
- Lowrie-Dennis, G. (2017). Indigenous-Municipal Intergovernmental Agreements: A Case Study Examining Substantive Collaboration.
- Lyon, K. R. V. (1974). *Democracy and the Canadian political system: an analysis of the responsiveness of the political system to pressures to increase citizen participation in policy-making* (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).
- Maaka, R., & Fleras, A. (2009). Mainstreaming indigeneity by indigenizing policymaking: Towards an indigenous grounded analysis framework as policy paradigm. *Indigenous Policy Journal*, 20(3).
- McConnell, W. (2020). Canadian Bill of Rights. In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-bill-of-rights>
- McDermott, V. (2024, June 6). Funding concerns puts Fort McMurray supportive housing program at risk. *Fort McMurray Today*. Retrieved June 7, 2024, from <https://www.fortmcmurraytoday.com/news/local-news/funding-concerns-puts-fort-mcmurray-supportive-housing-program-at-risk>
- McManus, T. (2017, April 12). New West considers truth and reconciliation initiatives. *New West Record*. Retrieved from <https://www.newwestrecord.ca/local-news/new-west-considers-truth-and-reconciliation-initiatives-3050047>
- McManus, T. (2024, April 28). What's happening in New West in May. *New West Record*. Retrieved from <https://www.newwestrecord.ca/in-the-community/whats-happening-in-new-west-in-may-8677146>
- McNeil, S. (2024, August 27). Signs show Saskatchewan leads reconciliation efforts: Lt. Gov. Mirasty. *SaskNow*. Retrieved from <https://sasknow.com/2024/08/27/signs-show-saskatchewan-leads-reconciliation-efforts-lt-gov-mirasty>
- Metro Vancouver. (2024). Reducing Emissions from Small Gas-Powered Equipment. *Metro Vancouver*. <https://metrovancover.org/services/air-quality-climate-action/small-gas-powered-equipment-emissions-reduction>.
- Musqueam Indian Band. (2025). Revenue sharing agreement and self-government agreement. *Musqueam Indian Band*.
- Nakagawa, N., Sinclair, H., Kelly, B. (2017, April 7). Reconciliation and the City of New Westminster: A Community Journey. *New Westminster*. <https://trnewwest.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/reconciliation-and-the-city-of-new-westminster-a-community-journey-20170407.pdf>
- Nejad, M. M. (2018). *City Planning, Design, and Programming for Indigenous Urbanism and Ethnocultural Diversity in Winnipeg* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Saskatchewan).
- Newman, D. G. (2009). *The duty to consult: New relationships with Aboriginal peoples*. UBC Press.
- Nowland-Foreman, G. (2017). Did Public Policy Kill Community Development?. In *The Routledge Handbook of Community Development* (pp. 54-70). Routledge.
- Northern Affairs Canada-a. (2013). Maps of Treaty-Making in Canada. *Government of Canada*. <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100032297/1544716489360>
- Northern Affairs Canada-b. (2013). Robinson Treaties and Douglas Treaties (1850-1854). *Government of Canada*.

- Papillon, M., & Rodon, T. (2020). The transformative potential of Indigenous-driven approaches to implementing free, prior and informed consent: lessons from two Canadian cases. *international journal on minority and group rights*, 27(2), 314-335. <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1360945974712/1544619909155>
- Parker, M., Patton, K., Madden, M., & Sinclair, C. (2010). From committee to community: The development and maintenance of a community of practice. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 29(4), 337-357.
- Perreault, S. 2022. Victimization of First Nations people, Métis and Inuit in Canada. *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00012-eng.htm>
- Peters, E. J. (2012). *Urban Aboriginal Policy Making in Canadian Municipalities / edited by Evelyn J. Peters*. McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Peters, S. K. (2016). Loaded Speech: Between Voices in Indigenous Public Speaking Events. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 26(3), 315-334.
- Phan Nay, S. (2023, March 21). Feds fund efforts to tackle disproportionate number of Indigenous, racialized people in Canadian prisons. *Canada's National Observer*. <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2023/03/21/news/feds-fund-efforts-tackle-disproportionate-indigenous-racialized-prisons>
- Pharo, E., Davison, A., McGregor, H., Warr, K., & Brown, P. (2014). Using communities of practice to enhance interdisciplinary teaching: lessons from four Australian institutions. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 33(2), 341–354. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2013.832168>. Sharing ideas and growing together motivates the community.
- Pinkerton, E. (2019). Benefits of collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities through community forests in British Columbia. *Canadian Journal of Forest Research*, 49(4), 387-394.
- Poitras Pratt, Y. (2021). Resisting symbolic violence: Métis community engagement in lifelong learning. *International journal of lifelong education*, 40(4), 382-394.
- Province of British Columbia. (2023). Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. *British Columbia*. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/new-relationship/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples>
- Purnell, D., & Jenkins, J. J. (2013). Breaking bread, creating community: Food's ability to increase communal ties and relationships. *Florida Communication Journal*, 41(1), 73-85.
- Radu, C. (2023). Fostering a positive workplace culture: Impacts on performance and agility. In *Human resource management-an update*. IntechOpen.
- Reed, M. S., Merkle, B. G., Cook, E. J., Hafferty, C., Hejnowicz, A. P., Holliman, R., ... & Stroobant, M. (2024). Reimagining the language of engagement in a post-stakeholder world. *Sustainability Science*, 19(4), 1481-1490.
- Reid, A. J., Popp J.N., McGregor, D., Miller, J., Marshall, A (2020). 20 Essential Reads to Enable Two-Eyed Seeing in Aquatic Research and Management. IAGLR Lakes Letter. Retrieved from: http://iaglr.org/docs/LL7__2eyedSeeing_essentialReads.pdf
- Renouf, R. (2022-a, September 29). New West introduces its Indigenous relations advisor. *New West Anchor*. Retrieved from <https://newwestanchor.com/p/new-westminster-indigenous-relations-advisor>
- Renouf, R. (2022-b, December 22). Soup, Bannock create community at New West City Hall. *New West*

- Anchor*. <https://newwestanchor.com/p/soup-bannock-community-new-west-city-hall>
- Renouf, R. (2023, April 6). A year of truth: Journal New Westminster 2023-2024. New West Anchor. Retrieved from <https://newwestanchor.com/p/a-year-of-truth-journal-new-westminster-2023-2024>
- Rose, R. C., Kumar, N., & Pak, O. G. (2009). The effect of organizational learning on organizational commitment, job satisfaction and work performance. *Journal of Applied Business Research (JABR)*, 25(6).
- Rudy. (May 12, 2014). Accomplices Not Allies: Abolishing the Ally Industrial Complex Retrieved from: <https://www.indigenouaction.org/accomplices-not-allies-abolishing-the-ally-industrial-complex/>
- Saji, J. Troian, M. Orr, D. (2023, October 18). Truth and reconciliation: Inside ‘Canada’s’ healthcare system. *IndigiNews*. <https://indiginews.com/features/truth-and-reconciliation-inside-canadas-healthcare-system>
- Sanderson, D. (2019, March 11). How to treat First Nations as equals? Abandon your “consultations”. *Policy Options*. <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/march-2019/treat-first-nations-equals-abandon-consultations/>
- Sha, J. (2021). Weaving Indigenous and Western ways of knowing in land and water conservation: Synthesis & Recommendations towards effective, mutually respectful and beneficial collaborations.
- Sheridan, J. E. (1992). Organizational culture and employee retention. *Academy of management Journal*, 35(5), 1036-1056.
- Sinclair, J. G. (1970). The Queen v. Drybones: The Supreme Court of Canada and the Canadian Bill of Rights. *Osgoode Hall LJ*, 8, 599.
- Smiley, D. V. (1970). The McRuer Report: Parliamentary majoritarian democracy and human rights. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 5(2), 3–10. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jcs.5.2.3>
- Spider, I. (2017). Five Facts About the Luna Moth. *The Infinite Spider*. Retrieved from: <https://infinitespider.com/five-facts-about-the-luna-moth/>.
- Squamish Nation. (2025). Referendum and election notices. *Squamish Nation*.
- Stanley, T. J. (2019). COMMEMORATING JOHN A. MACDONALD: Collective Remembering and the Structure of Settler Colonialism in British Columbia. *bc studies*, (204).
- Tagore, 2018 Embedding diversity in local government: experiences of establishing an ethnic advisory panel, Auckland, New Zealand. In *Group Relations Work* (pp. 57-78). Routledge.
- Tahlyan, D., Mahmassani, H., Stathopoulos, A., Said, M., Shaheen, S., Walker, J., & Johnson, B. (2024). In-person, hybrid or remote? Employers’ perspectives on the future of work post-pandemic. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 190, 104273.
- Tarnopolsky, W. S. (1971). The Canadian Bill of Rights from Diefenbaker to Drybones. *McGill LJ*, 17, 437.
- Sanders, D. E. (1973). The Indian Act and the Bill of Rights. *Ottawa L. Rev.*, 6, 397.
- Taylor, J. (2020). Indigenous Peoples and Government Policy in Canada. In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-people-government-policy>
- Taylor, S. (2023, June 21). Ottawa releases action plan to implement UNDRIP, despite calls for more consultation. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/undrip-action-plan-lametti-1.6884127>
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015-a). Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the

- Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. p.6.
- Truth and Reconciliation Canada. (2015-b). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
- Truth and Reconciliation Canada-b. (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: What We Learned: Principles for Reconciliation. *Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication*. https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/trc/IR4-6-2015-eng.pdf.
- Tsleil-Waututh Nation. (2025). Reconciliation Agreement with the Government of Canada. *Tsleil-Waututh Nation*.
- Varcoe, C., Brown, H., Timler, K., Taylor, M., & Straus, E. (2020). "Healing on Both Sides": Strengthening the Effectiveness of Prison–Indigenous Community Partnerships Through Reciprocity and Investment. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 11(3), 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.18584/iipj.2020.11.3.8064>
- Venkataramani, V., Labianca, G. J., & Grosser, T. (2013). Positive and negative workplace relationships, social satisfaction, and organizational attachment. *Journal of applied psychology*, 98(6), 1028.
- Walker, R., Moore, J., & Linklater, M. (2011). More than stakeholders, voices and tables: Towards co-production of urban Aboriginal policy in Manitoba. *Urban Aboriginal policy making in Canadian municipalities*, 160-201.
- Weaver, S. M. (1981). *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda 1968–1970*. University of Toronto Press.
- Wells, C. (2008). Suns, moons, clocks, and bells: Native Americans and time. *University of Wyoming, Department of History*, 1.
- Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating communities of practice: A guide to managing knowledge*. Cambridge, USA: Harvard Business School Press.
- White, P. (2023, June 1). Advocacy group for Indigenous women says isolation units should be banned in prisons. *The Globe and Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-advocacy-group-for-Indigenous-women-says-isolation-units-should-be/>
- Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Fernwood Publishing.
- Windchief, S., Polacek, C., Munson, M., Ulrich, M., & Cummins, J. (2017). In reciprocity: responses to critiques of indigenous methodologies. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 24(8), 532-542. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417743527>
- Yang, L., Holtz, D., Jaffe, S., Suri, S., Sinha, S., Weston, J., ... & Teevan, J. (2022). The effects of remote work on collaboration among information workers. *Nature human behaviour*, 6(1), 43-54.
- Zhen, L. I. (2024). Building an Academic English Teachers' Community of Practice: Collaboration and Innovation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 21(12), 573-579.

Appendix A

A story was shared in The Year of Truth journal about Elder William that is of value for the reader's learning of this research.

Billy is a St. Michael's Indian Residential School survivor from Alert Bay. When he was twelve years old, he ran away from the school and found himself at a cliff about a half mile away. He looked down the edge into the darkness below through the blur of tears and sweat. He stood there alone thinking about his life. He said a prayer to a Creator he didn't believe in and silently said goodbye to his mother and his brothers and sisters. As he worked up the nerve to take this last step of his fragile young life, he thought he heard a voice. He listens hard for the source of this voice and spots, Jamie, perhaps a year younger on the beach below. He hears Jamie's voice again, "Billy, wait for me!" Billy looked at Jamie and felt his resolve fall away. He knew that he could not allow Jamie to witness his death. The boy had scars that were deep enough already, so in one long wretched exhale he realized, I can't do this. I am to return to Residential School. Billy has no memory of how he descended the cliff side but never forgets his friend. After years of pain, Jamie died on the Downtown Eastside but his memory lives in the mind and heart of the boy he unknowingly saved that day. 60 years later on July 1st, 2021, that boy, once so defeated and near death, grasps the microphone speaking to the sea of orange around him. In a voice that is strong and even he declares, 'I don't want to cancel Canada. I just want Canada to grow up and do the right thing because it's the right thing to do' (Year of Truth-b, 2023, p.29).

Appendix B

Additional reading on the background of the Working Group:

Monthly meetings of SQUÁPSTUL YA:YS [ska-paw-stul yah-yis]: (Gathering to work) or the Reconciliation Working Group (RWG) where an open invitation is extended to a cross-section of departments to share in the experience of Participatory Action Research. The RWG plans and carries out the Truth Before Reconciliation Strategy (City of New Westminster-c, 2023, p.3).

The last big project for the coming year is the Truth before Reconciliation Strategy. Phase One in this strategy began in July 2022. Phase One was the establishment of a Reconciliation Working Group. City staff attended the first meeting of SQUÁPSTUL YA:YS (Gathering to Work), or “Reconciliation Working Group” on July 26th, 2022. The working group will be overseen by the Reconciliation, Social Inclusion and Engagement Task Force. It includes Public Engagement, Human Resources, Museums & Heritage and Indigenous Relations Divisions but all departments are welcome and encouraged to participate. This working group defines roles and responsibilities in order to engage all levels of the organization, external rights holders, stakeholders, and City Council to create a coordinated approach, and holistic strategy to advance Reconciliation (City of New Westminster-c, 2023, p.4).

Establishment of a Reconciliation Strategy Working Group City staff attended the first meeting of “Gathering to Work,” or “Reconciliation Working Group” (RWG) on July 26th, 2022. It includes a wide cross section of departments as all departments are welcome and encouraged to participate in order to engage all levels of the organization, external rights holders, stakeholders, and City Council to create a coordinated approach, and holistic strategy to advance Reconciliation. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE Two-Eyed Seeing governs the structure of the Reconciliation Working Group. Two-Eyed Seeing (Elder Albert Marshall) is the process of learning to see with one eye, the strengths of Indigenous knowledge and ways of being; and with the other eye, the strengths of western knowledge and ways of being. When we use them both together, it creates a third space where both knowledge systems work together to produce holistic outcomes that nurtures health and wellness. (Year of Truth-b, 2023, p.21).

Appendix C

Additional valuable quotes from The Year of Truth:

Mayor Patrick Johnstone: “New Westminster was incorporated in 1860, and is often described as the oldest City in Western Canada. Along with this comes the modern acknowledgement of its unique role in the colonization of the Lower Mainland: that of a beachhead and a seat of colonial government even prior to the formation of British Columbia or Canada. The City has a responsibility to understand and acknowledge that deep history, and where possible, correct the wrongs associated with that history.” (Year of Truth-b, 2023, p.2).

The complexities of New Westminster and the Fraser Canyon:

To ensure inclusive and fair consultation, the city invited Nations into these processes using British Columbia’s Consultative Areas Database as well as a consultation list maintained by the Port of Vancouver. However, these lists contained communities stretching from the Fraser Canyon, to the Lower Mainland, and across to Vancouver Island. There became an awareness of differing levels of Indigenous interests in the New Westminster area. The home territories of local Nations were different from the interests of other Nations that would come here seasonally through familial ties and relationships between communities. The process of colonization disrupted these relationships, forever altering their connections to this place. (Year of Truth-b, 2023, p.12).

In fact, Aboriginal Rights to local lands, including reserves, were repeatedly questioned in the Minutes of Council. Moreover, Council’s 1999 request for treaty lands to become a part of the municipality illustrates a longstanding priority of lands to serve the city. (Year of Truth-b, 2023, p.17).

Appendix D

Applying the learnings – first person account by the researcher:

When I first began this research, I met with Christina Coolidge to discuss the research proposal a couple times. On one of those occasions, October 5, 2023, I shared my insecurities; of being a non-Indigenous woman conducting two-eyed seeing research on an Indigenous-aligned program. I remember she told me I was being “invited into the space” and that those who are angry with that invitation perhaps are those who are “unhealed” or still “on their journey to healing.” It was my first introduction to this concept of healing when entering this space. Healing what? Healing why? I couldn’t fully grasp it at that moment, but accepted her comfort and invitation to continue this work regardless of my imposter syndrome and concerns of being labelled with a “white saviour complex.” I held onto the hope that I could make my intentions of allyship clear in this process and perhaps take on the role of “accomplice” by the end (Rudy, 2014).

This carried into my first session of tawâw. I remember saying hello to Christina in the parking lot. She had her wagon filled to the brim with Indian Taco toppings. I could already smell the sweetness of the black beans. I asked her what I could do to help, and she welcomed the assistance to set up what would prove to be a very long and largely attended tawâw. After 3 hours of tawâw, everyone departed, and I was sitting there with Elder William. I had thought I would feel nervous to ask him questions, but Elder William has a way of dissipating those nerves. He shares: “In my culture food is a must for anything that is going to occur. It not only nourishes you it warms our hearts.” And adds “Wellness touches everybody whether they want it or not.” I ponder this notion of wellness and warming your heart, if my heart is warmed then I would be more open to that wellness.

As I’m deeply considering this idea of wellness, Elder William says, “I come here to heal myself.” This was a shock to hear. If you meet Elder William, you think: “this is a healed man” and yet he is sharing that he continues his healing journey. I say: “and by doing that you’re healing others in this room.” He responds with “hmm.” Until this point I hadn’t considered my healing journey, was I supposed to? What is my healing journey? Now both Christina and Elder William have mentioned this healing journey. I didn’t know I was on one too.

Following this exchange, Elder William validates my presence “What you carry here will always be with you. You are always welcome here. You are family. When you break bread with us you are family” and later adds: “You’ve added your own flavor to tawâw.” The ability Elder William has to educate you and then validate you is so powerful, just thinking about it brings tears to my eyes.

On my third visit to tawâw Christina and Elder William presented me with a cake, gifts and bundles of sage. Elder William shared a story about “bearing witness” and why witnesses were important “to tell the people what you’ve seen here.” It was the first time I was gifted with a story by an Elder. I left with a sense of duty. To be a good witness. To share everything that I’ve learned. The sense of duty to this community will be with me forever.

Now, let me share a story:

In 2023, I arrived for my second residency for my Master’s program. We had a quick class and were told to arrive at a specific location for some “land-based learning.” Unfortunately, upon arrival at the location

my class was ill-prepared for our excursion. Our professor was not present nor aware it was his duty to prepare us for the events that day. He did not share that we would be entering an abandoned encampment to clean out invasive weeds. We were given gloves and a safety talk about watching for needles. Some of us were in sandals, but I was one of the lucky ones to be wearing runners. We climbed down the semi-steep trail and headed to the location surrounded by thin trees and thick ivy below apartment buildings. The encampment was very large with many living areas and belongings. I began pulling my weeds, but unbeknownst to me I was in the area that must have been the appointed “bathroom” by those living in the encampment; as I ended up getting human feces on my gloves, pants and shoes. This experience was scary at a health and safety level, humiliating at a personal level and infuriating at a student level. I felt I wasn’t protected nor cared for and those around me were not concerned with what had happened to me. That was day 1 of a full week of classes that were tainted by this experience.

Fast forward to 2024, and I was still holding onto the emotional harm that experience caused me, luckily there were no health incidentals from the experience, but emotionally, I still felt upset as I was preparing for my attendance of my final Residency in June. In May, I received the agenda for the event. There, on day four of the agenda “land-based learning.” All of the emotions came flooding back, the fear, humiliation and anger. I emailed my professor on May 27, to let them know I would not be attending. I was given the option to do extra credit to make up for my absence. I accepted.

The week following my reactive withdrawal, I sat with the notion of abandoning this land-based learning. I began ruminating on Elder William’s teachings and how he spoke about my bearing witness to tawâw and sharing it with others. At this point, I had spent a month listening and learning about wellness and healing, yet I was stepping away from land-based learning, an Indigenous pedagogy, because of my fear. Fear was paralyzing my chance at healing. Did I really want to be paralyzed in this status? I knew then that I had to be brave and accept the learnings as they presented themselves to me. Leading up to the event, I remember telling myself to be calm and that not all experiences are the same. To be open to this experience and put up boundaries if I need them.

We arrived at our destination. This time the land-based learning was not run by the same organization, and we would not be inside an encampment, nor in the same place. Instead, we were at a sun-kissed Inlet. The hosts, PEPAKEN HÁUTW Foundation, had us begin with a sharing circle. They broke the ice by having us share what bug we felt like that day. Many said lady bugs and bumblebees. I said praying-mantis; I was feeling defensive.

The hosts first shared that you don’t want to pull the weeds in anger and give it any negative energy and that “it isn’t their fault they’re in the wrong place.” I sat with that and felt some of the tension in my shoulders leave. The hosts then explained the various plants we’d be removing and said that an additional plant that isn’t quite as invasive (but needs removal to help the native plants thrive) were buttercups and that they are easier to remove and gentle on the body. So, we ventured down the pathway lined with evergreen and found a clearing to work in. I knew in that moment I was now both physically and emotionally walking the path of my healing journey.

I sat down amongst lines of shining yellow buttercups, pictured in Figure 22. The sun was that perfect comfortable heat, comforting me as I removed and piled the delicate flowers. It was so calm and quiet. A deer moseyed by, and I felt this overwhelming peace. An owl landed in the tree closest to me. I looked at it for a long moment and it looked back. I remember my husband warning me that if an owl visits our

home, it is often a signal of death, but what if you're not home? Certainly, this feels like an ending, but not to life. To my hurt and my anger, it was the end.

Figure 22

Jessica Tailfeathers with the Buttercups



At the closing circle, I did something out of character. We were all sharing how we felt about that day, and I shared my story, and I cried. Not from sadness, but from my relief and my joy. I entered as a praying-mantis and left something else. They never asked what insect I left as, but I had spent time thinking about it. I felt like a moth. Someone who had gone through a transformation; now attracted to light. I picture myself as the North American Luna Moth, whose wings are green with a dash of yellow, like the buttercup. And how funny as the original name of the Luna Moth “roughly translates into brilliant feather tail” (Spider, 2017). This name resonates with who I aspire to be.

This story is an example of how this work changed me as a person. I learned about being brave enough to heal myself and go on my own healing journey. I think back to my first year of my graduate program when Dr. Susanne Thiessen said that on this land: “we are all colonized people” and that stays with me as I look into the work tawâw is doing to heal, arguably, the oldest colonial space in British Columbia. It’s through the lessons that Christina Coolidge and Elder William instill that can bring healing, but you have to be brave enough to walk towards that pathway of healing.

Appendix E

Search string logic for Media Analysis:

Search string: tawâw

<https://www.fortmcmurraytoday.com/news/local-news/funding-concerns-puts-fort-mcmurray-supportive-housing-program-at-risk>

The work of Tawâw, a permanent supportive housing program focusing on chronically homeless Indigenous people, could unravel within the next six months if funding is not secured.

<https://nationalpost.com/life/food/you-are-welcome-there-is-room-in-tawaw-enoch-cree-chef-shane-m-chartrand-charts-his-alberta-upbringing-and-unique-culinary-style>

The meaning of tawâw (a Cree word pronounced ta-WOW) — there is room, you are welcome — is a further expression of this sentiment, says Chartrand: “You are welcome to be with me any time. My home is yours. My friendship is yours. My culture is yours.”

Search string: "City workers" and learn Indigenous

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/victoria-mayor-sorry-some-felt-excluded-in-removal-of-john-a-macdonald-statue-1.4073283?cache=yes%3FclipId%3D89563>

The “city family” refers to a local group that is working on reconciliation with Indigenous people. It includes members of the Esquimalt and Songhees nations, city councillors and non-Indigenous community members.”

Search string: "city family" and Lisa Helps and food

<https://www.timescolonist.com/local-news/2-victoria-councillors-try-to-end-free-lunches-for-themselves-they-are-outvoted-4678484>

“But Coun. Ben Isitt said he’s learning that Indigenous traditions support the idea that meeting participants “break some bread together” before getting on with important work. He noted, for instance, that every meeting of the City Family, which includes councillors as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous appointees, begins with catered food.”

Search string: city staff and learn indigenous and British Columbia

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/city-of-vancouver-first-nations-undrip-action-plan-1.7223092>

Providing affordable housing for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents is also among the 18 goals, as is training city staff to ensure an understanding of Indigenous rights and the city's responsibilities to uphold those rights.

Search string: "City staff" and learn Indigenous and Alberta

<https://www.sprawlgcalgary.com/white-goose-flying-six-years-later>

One of the TRC's calls to action is for government staff to receive public awareness training on Indigenous issues. According to White Goose Flying, this means city hall must “review current

HR practices, policies and training programs, and find resources for developing awareness and training programmes for all City staff on Truth and Reconciliation.”

In a June 2021 presentation to council’s priorities and finance committee, Poucette recognized this call to action as a challenge, since city staff’s TRC education isn’t yet mandatory.

“We’ve done training in ‘Indigenous 101,’ just to give the basic facts, amongst city staff,” she told committee. “We’ve done training with Indigenous engagement. We’ve arranged meetings between different business units to spend an afternoon with elders and learn about Indigenous cultures and worldviews and protocols.”

Search string: "City staff" and learn Indigenous and Alberta

<https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/assessing-calgarys-progress-on-truth-and-reconciliation>

The same year, the city also issued an Indigenous policy, which introduced four principles to guide its interactions with First Nations communities: educating city employees on Indigenous culture and treaty rights, engaging with Treaty 7 Nations on city projects that concern them, building relationships through collaboration and incorporating Indigenous practices.

Other actions took time.

In January 2020, three years later, the city launched its Indigenous Relations Office (IRO).

Among other initiatives, the IRO (Indigenous Relations Office) offers training programs for city staff on truth and reconciliation.

Search string: "City staff" and learn Indigenous and Manitoba

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/winnipeg-indigenous-accord-1.4169605>

The city previously said it has developed a half-day session that will allow city staff to learn about residential schools and their long-lasting effects. According to a report to council last December, the city had cultural teachers and elders ready to deliver training "in 2017 and beyond, until all staff have participated." It's unclear how long it will take for all City of Winnipeg employees to attend the educational seminars, the mayor said Tuesday.

Search string: "City staff" and learn Indigenous and Manitoba

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/city-winnipeg-most-anti-racist-1.6392129>

The presentations are a collaboration between the citizen-involved human rights committee and the city's equity and diversity department...The presentations were initially meant just for city staff, Sveinson said, but the human rights committee suggested they be live streamed and then posted on the city's website.

Search string: city staff and learn Indigenous and Saskatchewan

<https://larongenow.com/2024/08/27/signs-show-saskatchewan-leads-reconciliation-efforts-lt-gov-mirasty/>

The province of Saskatchewan is leading the way when it comes to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, said Lieutenant Governor Russell Mirasty in Prince

Albert on Tuesday... "I can't comment on the entire journey of reconciliation but certainly, you know, when we talk about treaties, Saskatchewan, in my mind, leads the way," Mirasty said. He pointed specifically to initiatives like requiring treaties to be taught in school, the work of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, and official government signage marking treaty boundaries.

Search string: city staff and learn Indigenous and Saskatchewan

<https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/city-hall/city-of-regina-considering-developing-an-indigenous-framework>

An internal survey concluded there is a "lack of leadership and cohesive direction" inside city department on cultural education and reconciliation.

Appendix F

Search string for literature review:

The approach with this literature review was to tell the “story” of research on how Canada has arrived to the term “Indigenizing policymaking” this transformed into understanding tokenism in policymaking and focusing on municipalities. All search strings are from google scholar unless otherwise noted.

Search string: Worldviews Indigenous voice - date range “2000-2010”

Bear, L. L. (2000). Jagged worldviews colliding. *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision*, 77, 85-108.

Search string: Canad* Indian* and "participatory democracy" - date range “1960-1970”

Smiley, D. V. (1970). The McRuer Report: Parliamentary majoritarian democracy and human rights. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 5(2), 3–10. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jcs.5.2.3>

Search string: Indians Canada politic* policy - date range “1960-1970”

Cairns, H. A. C. (1966). A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: A Report on Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies, Vol. I.

Search string: Canad* Indian* and "participatory democracy" - date range “1970-1980”

Lyon, K. R. V. (1974). Democracy and the Canadian political system: an analysis of the responsiveness of the political system to pressures to increase citizen participation in policy-making (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).

Borovoy, A. A. (1973). Civil Liberties in the Imminent Hereafter. *Can. B. Rev.*, 51, 93.

Search string: Trudeau and "Participatory Democracy"

Hessing, M. B. (1984). Production of the public voice: public participation in the hearing process as contemporary democracy (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).

Search string: Canad* Indian* and "participatory democracy" - date range 1980-1990

Boldt, M., & Long, J. (1984). Tribal Traditions and European-Western Political Ideologies: The Dilemma of Canada's Native Indians. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue Canadienne De Science Politique*, 17(3), 537-553. doi:10.1017/S0008423900031905

Weaver, S. M. (1981). Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda 1968–1970. University of Toronto Press.

Search string: "Canad* Indian* and "participatory democracy" - date range 1990-2000

Long, J. A. (1990). Political Revitalization in Canadian Native Indian Societies. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 23(4), 751–773. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423900020837>

Search string: "Native Protest Activity"

Galois, R. M. (1992). The Indian Rights Association, Native Protest Activity and the 'Land Question' in British Columbia, 1903–1916. *Native Studies Review*, 8(2), 1.

Search string: Indigenous Canadian Protest Activity

Barker, A. J. (2015). 'A direct act of resurgence, a direct act of sovereignty': Reflections on idle no more, Indigenous activism, and Canadian settler colonialism. *Globalizations*, 12(1), 43-65.

Search string: duty to consult Indigenous – date range 2000-2010

Newman, D. G. (2009). The duty to consult: New relationships with Aboriginal peoples. UBC Press.

Search string: Indigenizing policy making

Maaka, R., & Fleras, A. (2009). Mainstreaming indigeneity by indigenizing policymaking: Towards an indigenous grounded analysis framework as policy paradigm. *Indigenous Policy Journal*, 20(3).

From the previous search I then did a search string: Maaka & Fleras

Fleras, A., & Maaka, R. 2010. Indigeneity-Grounded Analysis (IGA) as Policy(-Making) Lens: New Zealand Models, Canadian Realities. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 1(1).

Search string: Indian rights and protests Canada

Galois, R. M. (1992). The Indian Rights Association, Native Protest Activity and the 'Land Question' in British Columbia, 1903–1916. *Native Studies Review*, 8(2), 1.

Search string "policy engagement indigenous"

Sha, J. (2021). Weaving Indigenous and Western ways of knowing in land and water conservation: Synthesis & Recommendations towards effective, mutually respectful and beneficial collaborations.

In reading Sha led to search string: two-eyed seeing Canada

Reid, A. J., Popp J.N., McGregor, D., Miller, J., Marshall, A. (2020). 20 Essential Reads to Enable Two-Eyed Seeing in Aquatic Research and Management. IAGLR Lakes Letter. Retrieved from: http://iaglr.org/docs/LL7_2eyedSeeing_essentialReads.pdf

Giles, A., Fanning, L., Denny, S., & Paul, T. (2016). Improving the american eel fishery through the incorporation of indigenous knowledge into policy level decision making in canada. *Human Ecology : An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 44(2), 167-183. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10745-016-9814-0>

Bartlett, C., Marshall, M., & Marshall, A. (2012). Two-eyed seeing and other lessons learned within a co-learning journey of bringing together indigenous and mainstream knowledges and ways of knowing. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, 2(4), 331-340. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13412-012-0086-8>

Search string: symbolic violence

Poitras Pratt, Y. (2021). Resisting symbolic violence: Métis community engagement in lifelong learning. *International journal of lifelong education*, 40(4), 382-394.

Search string: "symbolic violence" Indigenous

Fridkin, A. J. (2016). *First Nations involvement in health policy decision-making: The paradox of meaningful involvement* (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).
In reading Fridkin reference list:

Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of planners*, 35(4), 216-224.

Search string: "Indigenous inclusion" and "policy making" and "municipal*"

Heritz, J. (2018). From self-determination to service delivery: Assessing Indigenous inclusion in municipal governance in Canada. *Canadian Public Administration*, 61(4), 596-615.

Heritz, J. (2021). Municipal-Indigenous Relations in Ontario: Initiatives in Brantford, Hamilton, and Niagara. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 55(3), 541-563.

Fawcett, R. B., Walker, R., & Greene, J. (2015). Indigenizing city planning processes in Saskatoon, Canada. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 24(2), 158-175.

Search string: ""nation-to-nation" relationship municipal*"

Papillon, M. (2020). Nation to nation? Canadian federalism and Indigenous multi-level governance. *Canadian Federalism: Performance, Effectiveness, and Legitimacy*, 395.

Papillon cited: Alcantara & Nelles. (2016). *A Quiet Evolution: The Emergence of Indigenous-Local Intergovernmental Partnerships in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
<https://utorontopress.com/ca/a-quiet-evolution-4>.

Search string: “Arnstein ladder Indigenous tokenism policy”

Black, K., & McBean, E. (2017). Analysis of challenges and opportunities to meaningful Indigenous engagement in sustainable water and wastewater management. *Water Policy*, 19(4), 709-723.

Kalyta, P. (2022). The Ladder of Indigenous Governance. Forthcoming in *The Ladder of Indigenous Governance*. In Magnan, M, Michelon, G.(Eds.) *Handbook of Corporate Governance and Corporate Social Responsibility*. Edward Elgar Publishing: London, UK.

Search String Google: “barriers to indigenous development”

Canada. Parliament. House of Commons. Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs. *Barriers to Economic Development in Indigenous Communities [Report]*. (April 2022). 44th Parliament, 1st Session. p.6-13.
<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/INAN/Reports/RP11714230/inanrp02/inanrp02-e.pdf>

Search String Google News: “Indigenous communities consulted or decision making”

Forrester, B. (2023, February, 6). *Feds unable to list Indigenous communities consulted on reconciliation council bill*. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/reconciliation-council-c29-list-1.6736579>

Grattan, M. (2023, July 25). *Governments are failing to share decision-making with Indigenous people, Productivity Commission finds*. *The Conversation*.
<https://theconversation.com/governments-are-failing-to-share-decision-making-with-indigenous-people-productivity-commission-finds-210392>

Sanderson, D. (2019, March 11). How to treat First Nations as equals? Abandon your “consultations”. *Policy Options*. <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/march-2019/treat-first-nations-equals-abandon-consultations/>

Search String Google: “Indigenous relations team or Indigenous relations advisor and local government”

Tagore, R. (2018). Embedding diversity in local government: experiences of establishing an ethnic advisory panel, Auckland, New Zealand. In *Group Relations Work* (pp. 57-78). Routledge.

Sullivan, P. J. (2011). *Belonging together: Dealing with the politics of disenchantment in Australian Indigenous affairs policy*. Aboriginal Studies Press.

Search String Google: "indigenous relations office"

Mager, Z. L. (2017). *Planning with Indigenous Peoples: Meaningful Municipal Consultation and Engagement as a Key Part of Relationship Building*.

Search string Google: "evaluation" and "Indigenous Relations" and Canada

Campbell, T. M. (2019). "The ties that bind": Indigenous Relations Specialists and the Temporal Politics of Reconciliation.

Search string Google: volunteer civic participation for municipalities and Canada

Graham, K. A. (2015). The paradox of participation: an overview of public participation and local government in Canada. *Citizen participation at the local level in China and Canada*, 13-30.

Appendix G

Search string logic for Discussion and Analysis section:

Search string: framework for community development and government

Result: N/A

After a thorough review of the sources that appeared in the search results it was evident that the above search term would not result in appropriate resources. Therefore the researcher moved from Community Development searches to searches on creating community.

Search string: creating community for municipal employees

Result: Secret, M., & Swanberg, J. (2008). Work-family experiences and the insights of municipal government employees: A case study. *Public Personnel Management, 37*(2), 199-221.

The title of the resource identified above gave an initial impression that the article was about a workplace culture that “felt like family;” however, the article instead was about work-life balance when it impacts family and home-life for municipal employees. This source did not aid in defining the theme clusters, although they did inspire the next search string to include quotations around “creating community” thus defining a narrower search scope.

Search string: “creating community” for municipal employees

Result: West, G. R. *Creating Community*, 2011

For the purposes of the theme clustering the researcher continued on the keyword search exploring West’s “learning community” into the next search string.

Search string: learning community and "workplace"

Result: Cairns, L., & Malloch, M. (2011). Learning in the workplace: Communities of practice and beyond. *The Sage handbook of workplace learning, 73-85*.

Cairns & Malloch present the concept of Communities of Practice, and state it originated from Lave & Wenger (1991), which led to:

Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating communities of practice: A guide to managing knowledge*. Cambridge, USA: Harvard Business School Press.

Wenger, E., & Wenger-Trayner, B. (2007). Introduction to communities of practice. *Recuperado el, 7*.

Search string: "community of practice" and "community development"

Parker, M., Patton, K., Madden, M., & Sinclair, C. (2010). From committee to community: The development and maintenance of a community of practice. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 29(4), 337-357.

Curious of any other articles by Parker, the researcher wanted to see if additional research was conducted to elaborate the work.

Search string: "community of practice" and "community development" Parker

Lucero, D., Scott, R., Oré, C. E., & Parker, M. (2020). The Development and Implementation of Gathering Grounds, a Virtual Community of Practice Rooted in Indigenous Praxis. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 44(3), 45-64.

Matthew, V., Lipkin-Moore, S., Plumblee, J., Lavoine, N., Lucia, L., Selvi, E., ... & Arce-Trigatti, A. (2022, August). A Roadmap for the Design and Implementation of Communities of Practice for Faculty Development. In *2022 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition*.

Appendix H

1. Overall Experience

If you have participated in tawâw, can you provide an overview of your experience with the program? If yes, what motivated you to participate the program?

How did you first hear about tawâw?

2. Program Content and Structure

If you have participated in tawâw, how is tawâw structured? In your own words, can you describe the objectives of tawâw? What do you walk away with after attending tawâw? What has been your biggest takeaway?

3. Program Delivery and Facilitation

If you have participated in tawâw, can you describe an experience that you had at tawâw that has impacted the way you work?

If you have not participated in tawâw, can you describe an experience that you've seen where there was a direct impact from tawâw by others?

If you have participated in tawâw, what is the most vivid memory you have of tawâw?

4. Impact and Outcomes

If you have participated in tawâw, can you share any specific skills or knowledge you gained from participating in the program?

If you have not participated in tawâw, have you seen others gain skills or knowledge from participating in tawâw?

Have you noticed any changes in your personal or professional life as a result of this program?

Has tawâw impacted your workplace relationships? How so?

5. Suggestions for Change

If you have participated in tawâw, is there anything you would change about tawâw? Why?

If you have not participated in tawâw, can you share why not? What needs to change in-order for you to want to attend tawâw?

If you have participated in tawâw, is there anything else you would like to add about your experience with the tawâw program?

6. Policy

Has tawâw had a direct impact on policymaking?

Can you tell me how?