Mayor Fred Eisenberger  
Mayor  
City of Hamilton  
77 James Street North  
Hamilton, Ontario  
L8R 2K3  

October 13, 2009  

Dear Mayor Eisenberger,

The Friendship Centres across Canada have had a long and successful working relationship with municipalities serving the needs of urban Aboriginal people. Today we are asking for your help.

The (NAFC) was established in 1972 to represent the growing number of Friendship Centres at the national level. Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, the NAFC monitors activities and programs of federal government departments which have a mandate to provide funding or services to urban Aboriginal people. The Association also acts as a central communications body and as a facilitator of national level programs and services for its member Centres.

Friendship Centres represent a community based and directed Aboriginal institution serving the interests of urban Aboriginal Peoples in the areas of social, cultural, recreational, economic and community development. An Aboriginal Friendship Centre is a primary information referral agency and recognized training institution. Friendship Centres provide and promote human resource development through a wide range of programs and services to a diverse and increasing urban Aboriginal community.

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre Program, the vehicle by which the Federal government supports Friendship Centre core activities, is being funded at 1984 levels. Since 1992, funding levels in real terms have been reduced from $19,564,114 to $14,632,048. This is about the same amount of funding received in the mid-1980s. When you take into account inflation, we are struggling under the financial burden of serving our people.

At the same time, Friendship Centres continue to serve a record amount of people. Our most recent detailed analysis for the previous fiscal year revealed that Friendship Centres provided 1.1 million client services through 1260 programs. Our commitment to being a service provider for urban Aboriginal people has not diminished despite our financial challenges.

In response to these tremendous challenges, the NAFC in partnership with the Department of Canada Heritage developed a Business Case for the Long-Term Sustainability of Friendship Centres. A copy of this business case has been attached for your information.

This is a critical time for a key piece of your communities social service infrastructure – your local Friendship Centre. Please talk to your local Member of Parliament, the Minister of Canadian Heritage and add your voice to the growing number of people calling for enhanced funding for Friendship Centres.
If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact our Executive Director, Peter Dinsdale, at 613-563-4844 ext. 318 or at pdinsdale@nafc.ca.

In Friendship,

[Vera Pawis Tabobondung signature]

Vera Pawis Tabobondung  
President

Encl.  Business Case for the Long Term Sustainability of Friendship Centres
BUSINESS CASE FOR THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF FRIENDSHIP CENTRES
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The federal government has invested in Friendship Centres for more than 40 years. The long-term sustainability of Friendship Centres requires enhancements to the funding levels that were established, and remain unchanged, over a decade ago. Aboriginal people represent the fastest growing population in Canada. Of that population, the number of urban Aboriginal people is the fastest growing – more than 70% of Aboriginal people do not live on reserves. In order to protect the federal government’s investment, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of Friendship Centres, these funding levels need to be examined in the context of today’s pressing realities.

The Business Case for the Long-Term Sustainability of Friendship Centres was developed jointly by the Aboriginal Affairs Branch of the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the National Association of Friendship Centres. Originally produced in 2006, the Business Case was revised and updated through the fall and winter of 2008-09. This summary is a product of those joint efforts.

In 2007/08, the Friendship Centres across Canada delivered over 1,300 programs and services worth more than $93 million to over 1.3 million participants on a status blind basis — that is, equally to status and non-status First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-Aboriginal people. Furthermore, the entire Friendship Centre Movement, consisting of 118 Friendship Centres, delivered almost $109 million in programs and services to Canada’s rapidly increasing urban Aboriginal population. With the $16.1 million in support for core operations from Canadian Heritage’s Aboriginal Friendship Centre Program (AFCP), Friendship Centres delivered over $37 million for federal departments; over $39 million for provincial/territorial governments; $4.5 million for municipal governments; and $4 million for non-governmental and other Aboriginal organizations.

Over half of the Aboriginal population lives in urban centres. In general, they experience lower education levels, higher unemployment rates and lower income levels than the rest of the urban population. Friendship Centres are one of the first demonstrations of contemporary Aboriginal self-determination – today they continue to be at the frontline serving the pressing needs of urban Aboriginal people. They are a nexus of services for a much larger population, a complex network of governments and government departments, and addressing a wider range of issues than ever. Friendship Centres must do this faced with the challenges of maintaining high delivery, governance and accountability standards; remuneration levels for staff based on the programming levels of 30 years ago; crumbling physical infrastructure; outdated technological systems; and pressing policy and communications requirements of a growing network of Friendship Centres across Canada.

Friendship Centres play a pivotal role in community and economic development by providing employment opportunities and training, facilitating social development, and building human and resource capacity. Oftentimes, Friendship Centres possess the necessary infrastructure and people power to help other organizations host events, press conferences, training and programming. Given that the urban Aboriginal population is the fastest growing segment of the Canadian Aboriginal population, the value of Canada’s most significant network of Aboriginal service delivery providers will continue to grow.

"FRIENDSHIP CENTRES HAVE PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY FOCUSED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR ABORIGINAL CANADIANS."

Minister of Canadian Heritage, May 2006
WHAT ARE FRIENDSHIP CENTRES?

Aboriginal Friendship Centres are the country's most significant off-reserve Aboriginal service infrastructure. The National Association of Friendship Centres, or NAFC, is a network of 118 Friendship Centres from coast to coast to coast. The NAFC was established in 1972 to represent, nationally, the growing number of Friendship Centres that had emerged across Canada.

There are 118 Friendship Centres across Canada, and in many cities, Friendship Centres are the only providers of culturally-enhanced programs and services to urban Aboriginal residents. For over 50 years, Friendship Centres have been facilitating the transition of Aboriginal people from rural, remote and reserve life to an urban environment. For many Aboriginal people, Friendship Centres are the first point of contact to obtain referrals to programs and services.

The overall purpose of Friendship Centres is to provide tools for Aboriginal people to succeed in all areas of Canadian society.

WHY INVEST IN FRIENDSHIP CENTRES?

Today, over half of Aboriginal people live in urban areas. On average, urban Aboriginal people have lower educational levels, higher unemployment rates and lower income levels than the rest of the urban population.

Friendship Centres evolved as a result of the need to accommodate migrating Aboriginal people from reserves, and rural and remote communities. In 2006, Aboriginal people accounted for 3.8% of the total population – up from 3.3% in 2001 and 2.8% in 1996.

Furthermore, the Aboriginal population is becoming increasingly urban. In 2006, 54% lived in an urban centre, an increase from 50% in 1996.

Urban Aboriginal people frequently face a disproportionately poor quality of life as the rest of Canadians. They are more likely to live in one-parent families, have poorer health status, have higher rates of homelessness, and greater housing need. Aboriginal people are also over-represented in the criminal justice system – as both victims and offenders – and are more likely to experience domestic violence.

FRIENDSHIP CENTRES ACROSS CANADA
THE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE MOVEMENT

Friendship Centres were one of the first institutions that allowed urban Aboriginal people the opportunity to acquire knowledge and develop skills and experience as administrators of service delivery institutions. Through the devolution of the administration and delivery of the AFCP to the NAFC in 1996, conditions for the long-term development of modern Aboriginal governance were created.

The Friendship Centre Movement is made up of three distinct entities: individual Friendship Centres which provide services directly to urban Aboriginal residents in their communities; Provincial and Territorial Associations (PTAs) which administer programs to their Friendship Centres, provide training and coordination of services, lobby and work with their provincial/territorial governments on behalf of the Friendship Centres in their regions; and the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) which acts as a central unifying body for the Friendship Centre Movement, and is responsible for the program delivery and administration of the AFCP.

The NAFC's core activities include enhancing governance practices, promoting and advocating for the Friendship Centre Movement, coordinating and facilitating the delivery of national programs and services, policy development, and acts as a mediation body to assist Friendship Centres in difficulty. It works with other representatives, service agencies, volunteer organizations, private industry, and all levels of government towards improving the lives of urban Aboriginal people.

A volunteer board of directors, comprised of members from each of the provinces and territories in which Friendship Centres are located, governs the NAFC.

Recent audits and evaluations of federal programs found that the NAFC appropriately met requirements of Treasury Board's Policy on Transfer Payments. They also found that the NAFC adequately monitored the Friendship Centres to ensure that they were performing and reporting in accordance with the funding agreements.

The NAFC is also a third party deliverer for Canadian Heritage for the Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centres (UMAYC) and Young Canada Works programs.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDSHIP CENTRES (NAFC) HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND DELIVERY OF THE AFCP SINCE 1996. IT ALSO DELIVERS A RANGE OF PROGRAMS FOR VARIOUS LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.
Aboriginal Friendship Centre Program

Canadian Heritage's Aboriginal Friendship Centre Program (AFCP) has been providing the Friendship Centre Movement with an unchanged base of operating funds since 1988. This funding supports a core complement of staff that is then able to leverage funding from other government departments and levels of government to respond to the needs of their individual communities. It also provides a base level of support to the NAFC and the PTAs. For each dollar provided by the AFCP, Friendship Centres generate 9 dollars from other sources.

Audits and evaluations of the AFCP have found that the AFCP is successful in achieving its objectives and that sound governance frameworks are in place. They also found that Friendship Centres work very hard to build partnerships to avoid duplication, and were very confident that there was little, if any, duplication. They found that while services provided were similar to those provided by other agencies, all Friendship Centre programs are delivered in a culturally appropriate manner, which made them unique.

Canadian Heritage is currently working with the NAFC on improving the way it reports on expected outcomes related to the core-funding it provides to NAFC. While each Friendship Centre conducts community needs assessments on an on-going basis, Canadian Heritage is also working with the NAFC on conducting formal community needs assessments to ensure that there are no systematic barriers that prevent the full participation in, and access to, Aboriginal Friendship Centres by all Aboriginal peoples.

Half of the Aboriginal population is under 25 years of age. The youth perspective is very important to the Friendship Centre Movement, and the NAFC ensures the inclusion of the urban Aboriginal youth perspective through its Youth Council. By way of the Youth Council, youth are actively involved in the Friendship Centre Movement through better communication between youth and non-youth, access to training and development opportunities, leadership development, increased awareness of youth-specific issues, and engagement in activities for the preservation and promotion of Aboriginal cultures and heritage.

In addition to the Youth Council, the NAFC has an advisory board of members, the NAFC Senate, which consists of members of the Friendship Centre Movement who have served at local, regional, and national levels. Senators serve on a rotating basis and attend all meetings of the Board of Directors, and other meetings of the membership. They also act as role models for the Friendship Centre Movement.

Currently no funding is provided by the AFCP for the NAFC Youth Council and the NAFC Senate. The AFCP provides a very basic level of funding to support the core operations of the 7 PTAs. The PTAs provide an organizational focus and support the Friendship Centres in their respective regions. Each PTA promotes their Friendship Centres, and assists them in seeking funding, program delivery and policy development. The PTAs' activities also include organizing new programs, administering programs, and providing training and workshops for Friendship Centre staff.
In example, the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (IFC) coordinates services, manages and administers 127 programs on behalf of all levels of government for the 29 Friendship Centres in the province — over $37 million in programming in 2005/06. In addition, OFICC conducts on-going research, analysis and policy development on issues of concern to urban Aboriginal communities.

**A RE FRIENDSHIP CENTRES A SOUND INVESTMENT FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT?**

007/08, Friendship Centres across Canada delivered over 1,300 programs worth more than $93 million to over 1.3 million clients (this includes multiple users). Using the $16.1 million in AFCP funding, Friendship Centres delivered over $37 million of programs and services on behalf of federal departments, over $39 million for provincial governments, $4.5 million for municipal governments, and almost $1 million for non-governmental and other Aboriginal organizations. Friendship Centre Movement raised almost $5 million from raising activities and private donations.

Federal, provincial and municipal governments achieve significant savings by using Friendship Centres for the delivery of programs and services to urban Aboriginal people.

Innovation of programs and services through the network of community-led and community-directed organizations such as Friendship Centres enables the federal government, and other partners, to achieve substantial results for their financial investments.

One example is Canadian Heritage’s Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centres Initiative (UMAYC). This program, established in 1998, is delivered in part through the network of Friendship Centres across Canada. It costs the federal government an average of $16,000 to administer and deliver a UMAYC project; by contrast, it costs the NAFC $10,200 per project. This represents over 25 percent savings to the federal government. This arrangement provides Canadian Heritage with a logical and cost-effective way to deliver its program. Another example is the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, which receives $70,000 towards its administrative costs from the AFCP funding. It is able to generate over $1.2 million towards its administrative and management costs from other government sources, almost 15 times the level of funding it receives from AFCP.
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An newcomers have friendly welcome, The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon), July 26, 2005

Aims haven’t changed in some ways because the people of vision, who organized the first Friendship Centre, wanted a place for friends, relatives and newcomers to be able to gather and socialize. Many needed a place where they could usually support each other and exchange ideas and values,” says Mae Henderson, who has been the executive director since 1999. “What has changed is that we have more people, about 1,500 a month, coming through our doors. We still have those who need a cup of coffee, a place to relax in the foyer, a place where they sit down and chat. For some, especially in the winter, we are able to provide soup, bannock and sandwiches. We know by come to the door without having any breakfast,” says Henderson. “We are like a reception area, a starting point for the newly-arrived in the right direction. They have to find out where they can rent a home and how to develop an interest for a new community. We are advocates, who can send them towards the right agencies for help, and catalysts to identify their needs.”
ARE FRIENDSHIP CENTRES IMPROVING THE LIVES OF URBAN ABORIGINAL RESIDENTS?

FOR MANY ABORIGINAL PEOPLE, FRIENDSHIP CENTRES ARE THE FIRST POINT OF CONTACT TO OBTAIN REFERRALS TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT FACILITATE THEIR TRANSITION TO URBAN LIVING.
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FUNDING OF $16.1 MILLION MAKES $93.8 MILLION IN PROGRAMMING POSSIBLE
NATIONAL YOUTH ARE BEST SERVED BY CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE PROGRAMS, PROVIDED BY CULTURALLY
APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATIONS. THE AVAILABILITY OF SUCH PROGRAMS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN URBAN
AREAS WHERE YOUTH ARE MORE APT TO FEEL CUT OFF FROM THEIR FAMILIES.

- SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES, 2003
BORIGINAL YOUTH IN URBAN AREAS ARE RELUCTANT TO USE MAINSTREAM SERVICES, PREFERENCES TO USE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AS THE PRIMARY SERVICE PROVIDERS, OR, IN SOME INSTANCES, TO ACT AS INTERMEDIARIES WITH MAINSTREAM AGENCIES. MUCH OF THE RELUC-
TANCE HAS TO DO WITH THE HISTORICAL LEGACY OF DISCRIMINATION TOWARD ABORIGINAL PEOPLES.

original identities in the urban context are variable and complex. The Aboriginal community is very heterogeneous, encompassing members from a variety of First Nation communities, Métis, Inuit and non-status Indians. Apart from a few urban reserves, there is no land. There is a great diversity of circumstances within the urban Aboriginal population, ranging from street people to university graduates in professional occupations. There is considerable fluidity as individuals move to and from reserve-based communities.

friendship Centres promote the participation of Aboriginal people in the community by ensuring that their members are involved in entifying local needs, establishing priorities, and developing implementation plans. Friendship Centre staff liaise with other local service providers to ensure that they understand how their services might need to be adapted to be culturally appropriate for urban Aboriginal people.

Friendship Centres provide safe environments for urban Aboriginal people and engage youth in their learning while adapting to their arning styles, unique cultures and needs. They foster and promote arning environments that are safe, accessible, supportive and caring, and based on the principles of respect, diversity and inclusion, which recognizes the distinct identities that exist within each community.

Friendship Centres have long supported artistic and cultural activities such as acting as small neighbourhood art centres which provide a two way entry point to arts programs and community. Aboriginal children respond enthusiastically to such programs when facilities are available either through specific activities such as cultural gatherings or as a component to a family supportive program. Most Friendship Centres designate space for urban Aboriginal youth who are living in conditions of risk, including street and homeless children, to undertake artistic and cultural activities that spur both creativity and community interaction.

Friendship Centres have a long history in promoting and supporting the health and early learning of urban Aboriginal children and their families through early childhood development and head-start initiatives that respect the unique cultural identities of Aboriginal children. Their support includes working together toward culturally appropriate child-welfare supports to improve the well being of Aboriginal children, young people and families.

OTHER ELEMENT OF SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IS STRENGTHENED INDIVIDUAL, AMILY, AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING. THIS REQUIRES EFFECTIVE SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT THAT IS INCLUSIVE, HOLISTIC, AND CULTURALLY BASED, BOTH ON- AND OFF-RESERVE, WITH PROGRAMMING FOR ABORIGINAL WOMEN AND YOUTH AND SUPPORT FOR ABORIGINAL FRIENDSHIP CENTRES.
THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES (1996) HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANT ROLES PLAYED BY FRIENDSHIP CENTRES

Friendship Centres have generally been more successful than other Aboriginal institutions in meeting the needs of Aboriginal people in urban areas. Their programs have helped Aboriginal people to maintain their cultural identity and group solidarity. In most urban areas, the Friendship Centre is the only major voluntary association available to Aboriginal people to fulfil their social, recreational and cultural development needs. Friendship Centres have played an important role in the revitalization of Aboriginal cultures currently under way in Aboriginal communities across Canada and have helped Aboriginal people assume a place in the Canadian cultural mosaic.

The Centres have produced a wide range of positive achievements for Aboriginal people, including increased pride and self-esteem, and improved access to services, employment, training, housing and other benefits. Their activities have contributed to the development of stable and active urban Aboriginal communities, particularly their efforts to develop other Aboriginal agencies and organizations, hundreds of which grew out of Friendship Centre activities. The Centres have created greater awareness of Aboriginal issues in urban communities, encouraged non-Aboriginal agencies to be more responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people, and created a positive image of Aboriginal people. They have also, by reflecting Aboriginal values in their structure and operations, provided a useful model for other community agencies.

Friendship Centres have taken a lead in developing holistic services based on Aboriginal values, beliefs and practices such as caring, sharing, respect for others, acceptance, equality, individual responsibility for behaviour, non-interference and an emphasis on experience as a way of knowing. Evaluations of Friendship Centres consistently conclude that Aboriginal people feel more comfortable participating in Centre activities than in activities of non-Aboriginal agencies. Indeed, the success of the Centres in addressing the needs of Aboriginal people has led to a situation where non-Aboriginal agencies increasingly refer Aboriginal clients to Friendship Centres.

One of the most important activities of the Centres is the promotion of Aboriginal culture. This is particularly important for Aboriginal people in cities because many individuals have lost aspects of their culture, such as languages, and because it is often difficult to practice traditional Aboriginal culture without cultural resources
ich as elders, places to carry out ceremonies, and cultural education opportunities. Many Centres conduct Aboriginal language classes; many more host cultural events such as elders' gatherings, pow-wows, square dances and feasts. These functions will become increasingly important as Aboriginal young people continue to search for ways to strengthen their culture. Friendship Centres are ideally suited to expand their role in this regard through education, training, recreation and social programs. However, there is currently no specific funding for cultural education activities outside First Nations territories.

related public education function assumed by Friendship Centres is providing a bridge between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. Centres often act as a resource, providing information to non-Aboriginal people on the history, cultures and contemporary situation of Aboriginal people. Many Centres maintain speakers bureaus of individuals available to address schools and organizations about Aboriginal people and issues. They also regularly conduct cultural awareness workshops and seminars to sensitize the personnel of non-Aboriginal organizations. They are also consulted by municipal governments and institutions on such issues as delivering appropriate services to Aboriginal clients and developing employment equity policies. The demand for expansion of this community development role will likely increase as urban Aboriginal communities become more complex and more insistent on the need to design and deliver appropriate services. The federal government should recognize the important role of Friendship Centres and provide sufficient resources to enable them to fulfill this community development function.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES TO THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF FRIENDSHIP CENTRES?

While the urban Aboriginal population over the past decade has almost doubled in some cities, funding to Friendship Centres through Indian Heritage’s Aboriginal Friendship Centres Program (AFCP) has not increased.

In order to protect the federal government’s investment over the past 10 years, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of these institutions, the funding level that was established a decade ago needs to be examined in the context of today’s realities.

There are a number of funding challenges facing the Friendship Centre Movement today. Each of the areas described represents a significant need, which must be addressed if Friendship Centres are to survive in this changing environment. These needs can be divided into three areas: meeting the needs of existing Friendship Centres; outreach and the cost of doing business; and future growth.
FRIENDSHIP CENTRES ACROSS THE COUNTRY SERVES THE INTEREST OF URBAN ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN THE AREAS OF SOCIAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT. FRIENDSHIP CENTRES PRODUCE A WIDE RANGE OF POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE, INCLUDING INCREASED PRIDE AND SELF-ESTEEM AND IMPROVED ACCESS TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- CANADA'S PERFORMANCE REPORT, TREASURY BOARD SECRETARIAT, 2005
**WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACING FRIENDSHIP CENTRES?**

**Meeting Today's Needs**

**Standards, Practice and Stability**
Friendship Centres are delivering programs and services in a more complex and demanding environment than they were ten years ago. In 2006/07 they delivered more than 1,200 programs for all levels of government. Friendship Centres staff are required to meet governance and accountability standards in an increasing number of programs and service areas, to an ever-increasing urban Aboriginal population.

**Unemployment**
The AFCP funding for salaries has not increased in the past decade. This severely limits the ability of Friendship Centres from attracting and maintaining high quality staff, particularly in medium and large urban centres where there is more competition for staff. This is resulting in loss of efficiencies due to high turnovers in staff.

**Inflation**
The AFCP funding is provided on a multi-year basis but is not adjusted for inflation. As a result, Friendship Centres have not been able to keep up with increases in the cost of living, which have amounted to a 15 percent reduction in purchasing power over the past decade.

**Administration**
While up to 3.5 percent of AFCP funding is allowed for training purposes, as a result of other existing pressures relating to salary, operational and other administrative outlays, Friendship Centres are unable to allocate the designated percentage for training. Currently, training resources are only provided as a remedial measure to Friendship Centres experiencing management and/or financial difficulties. This approach is not sustainable, as training is fundamental to maintaining the level and quality of program and service delivery, as well as meeting management and administrative requirements as a third party deliverer.

**Reach & Cost of Doing Business**

**Staff**
The AFCP provides funding for staffing based on 1976 programming levels. Current program delivery levels are significantly higher and are more complex, resulting in a requirement for additional human resources. Each Friendship Centre requires at a minimum two additional staff to ensure that the administration of Friendship Centre programs and services meet current delivery standards.

**Technology**
Increasingly, larger portions of Friendship Centre budgets are being spent on technology. As governments move towards "e-governance", it is crucial that Friendship Centres invest in computers, servers and other forms of technology. Investments are required to meet increasing advances in technology.

**Communication**
Communication supports are required to ensure that Friendship Centres, the Provincial/Territorial Associations and the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) are able to communicate within the Friendship Centre Movement, as well as promote the role of Friendship Centres to other governments and non-governmental organizations.
Friendship Centres have a unique vantage point as program and service deliverers to the urban Aboriginal population. As such, they are increasingly being called upon to contribute to policy development of governments, other Aboriginal organizations and non-governmental organizations. Increased policy supports would facilitate more informed urban Aboriginal policy development for all stakeholders.

Languages
The current level of AFCP funding allocated to official language services is inadequate to meet operating expenses related to the provision of official language services to clientele, to cover translation and interpretation costs related to Board Meetings, annual general meetings of the membership, and translation of official documents. As a third party delivery partner with the federal government, Friendship Centres have a responsibility to deliver services in both official languages where numbers warrant.

Renewal
Ninety-five percent of Friendship Centres own their facilities, however this infrastructure is aging and requires upkeep. Under the AFCP, there has been no funding for capital upkeep in the past decade. Friendship Centres are faced with the challenge of being able to continue to operate in facilities with a significantly aging infrastructure that has not been maintained. In addition to the backlog of capital renewal needs, there are on-going costs associated with the upkeep of these facilities.

Growth
Developing succession within the Friendship Centre Movement is becoming critical to its viability as much of its leadership is now nearing retirement. Proper and responsible succession planning requires knowledge of organizational needs, research on the future needs of the organization, and training for the future leaders.

Emerging Friendship Centres
The urban Aboriginal population has more than doubled in most cities in the last decade. It is estimated that eight new Friendship Centres will be established in the next five years.

There will be a resulting requirement for staff, technology, communications, policy, official language, and capital renewal supports to operate these new Centres.
### Summary of Costs

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BUSINESS CASE FOR THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF FRIENDSHIP CENTRES