PARTNERSHIPS IN URBAN ABORIGINAL HOUSING PROJECTS:
A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

A REPORT FOR THE BRIDGES AND FOUNDATIONS PROJECT (CURA)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of public-private partnerships has proliferated over the past two decades as an innovative strategy for solving various problems faced by governments and their respective organizations.[1] This includes partnerships between Aboriginal governments and their federal, provincial and municipal counterparts. The importance of such partnerships is underscored by a document of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada which states that "[p]artnerships are crucial tools in Aboriginal economic development."[2] Intergovernmental partnerships are of particular importance in Saskatchewan, where the number of partnership arrangements between Aboriginal and provincial governments exceed those in the rest of Canada.[3] Many such partnerships between Aboriginal governments and their federal, provincial, and municipal counterparts are developed as a response to the grim socio-economic realities found within Aboriginal communities.

Inadequate housing standards within urban communities account for one such reality that Aboriginal people encounter. These housing inadequacies are reflected in the disproportionately higher incidence of poverty and marginalization experienced by Aboriginal people in urban centres.[4] Strategies to resolve inadequate housing standards include the development of collaborative partnerships. These partnerships need to incorporate actors from various sectors, including citizen participation, who can provide innovative, cooperative approaches to improve the quality of life of the Aboriginal people in need of affordable, safe, and adequate housing.

The major purpose of this report is to provide an abstract for a framework that can be used in the establishment of a partnership for Aboriginal housing projects. This report

is an abridgement, and simultaneously an elaboration, of a thesis focused on the

Aboriginal – provincial government gaming partnership, as it relates to urban Aboriginal

housing partnerships. The thesis was compiled through the deployment of an in-depth

case study approach involving the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN)

and the Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership. The content analysis focused on

primary data, and identified the key aspects of the partnership arrangement. The overall

objective of the thesis was to examine the fundamental issues related to the gaming

partnership. More specifically, it was an exploration of the genesis, the nature and scope,

and the accountability framework of that partnership from its original five-year

agreement to the twenty-five year agreement signed in 2002.

The lessons learned in the thesis are applicable and beneficial to urban Aboriginal

housing partnerships for reasons as follows. First, the analysis of the management and

accountability frameworks of collaborative partnerships contributes to an understanding

of the development of Aboriginal – governmental partnering models, for which research

is limited. For instance, in a collaborative housing partnership arrangement Aboriginal

organizations and governmental agencies must work together to formulate frameworks,

and implement cooperative strategies for the attainment of mutually acceptable

objectives, and the means by which to attain them. The relationship must therefore be

based upon mutual trust and respect, cooperation, well-defined roles and responsibilities,

established frameworks, and demonstrated commitment. In other words, harmonious

relations are essential for the success of a collaborative housing partnership.

Second, the thesis should prove useful in revealing the effect that such

collaborative partnerships can have for the socio-economic development in

Saskatchewan, particularly within Aboriginal communities. It is therefore important to research the challenges, risks, and successes of the partnership in order to further develop models that can be applied to potential partnership arrangements. Innovative strategies are important for socio-economic development in Saskatchewan for both Aboriginal communities and in the general populace. The theoretical literature on partnerships will be useful as models for other Aboriginal socio-economic development partnerships, such as those related to the urban Aboriginal housing projects.

Third, the thesis makes a contribution to the expanding body of literature on various types of intergovernmental and collaborative partnerships. Although there has been a substantial increase in research on key dimensions, functions, benefits and risks of partnership arrangements, much remains to be conceptualized and analyzed. Similarly, although there has been some attention devoted to the analysis of accountability frameworks within the scope of partnerships, further analysis is desirable. For instance, it is important to identify appropriate frameworks for housing partnerships, due to the potentially detrimental impact on partnering relations as a result of accountability challenges.

Fourth, the analysis of this particular collaborative partnership makes a contribution to existing literature on partnerships. The study of the gaming partnership between the Province and the FSIN provides an additional case study in that body of literature. More specifically, this particular case study will be useful in increasing the body of literature on partnerships and accountability in partnerships involving these two orders of governance, which to date is still relatively limited.

The next section of this report explores some theoretical perspectives on partnerships that are useful in understanding the phenomenon of partnering arrangements. The third section provides an explanation of the FSIN – Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership, which serves to set the context for the subsequent section. The fourth section provides an evaluation of the gaming partnership's experience, and thus highlights the valuable lessons learned in the arrangement that can be employed in urban Aboriginal housing partnerships. The final section presents the conclusion and discusses areas for further research.

2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON PARTNERSHIPS

The objective of this section is to provide some theoretical perspectives on relationships in partnerships with a special emphasis on accountability in partnerships. Such perspectives are very useful in understanding partnerships established for urban Aboriginal housing developments. For that purpose a brief review of the key points in the literature regarding the following matters is provided below: (i) the definition of partnerships; (ii) the types of partnerships; (iii) the factors that produce partnerships; and, (iv) the factors that contribute to the quality and the success of partnerships.

(i) *Defining Partnerships*. The term 'partnership' has many different meanings in different contexts.[5] The reason for this is that partnerships are complex and variable phenomena that do not lend themselves to a single and simple definition.[6] However, for the purpose of this report, the ideal partnership is defined as follows:

> "a relationship involving *the sharing of power, work, support and/or information* with others for the achievement of joint goals and/or mutual benefits."[7]

The term 'partnership' has been misconstrued and over-used, and thus for analytical purposes, it is important to identify those elements that differentiate partnerships from other organizational relationships. Some of the more distinguishing elements of a partnership include the following: the partners identify a potential synergistic relationship; the objectives of a partnership are social in addition to commercial; the nature of relations are based on "mutuality"[8]; partnerships typically pass through the stages of a life cycle, wherein modes of governance and relationships change; and because partnerships are non-static and dynamic, their processes need to be assessed and evaluated as they evolve.[9]

(ii) Partnership Typology. Partnerships can be categorized according to a range of characteristics that identify specific dimensions or activities in various types of partnering arrangements. These broad categories are useful both in categorizing classes of partnerships and also for understanding a particular partnership arrangement. Partnerships can be categorized by assessing the following: the power base of the partnership arrangement, the purpose of the partnership, the key actors involved in the partnership, the life stage that the partnership is in, and the 'implementation mechanisms' of who does what, and how in the arrangement. The four types of partnerships generally derived from these sets of characteristics are the collaborative, the operational, the contributory, and the consultative partnerships.[10]

The 'collaborative partnership' involves power sharing, wherein each partner foregoes a certain level of autonomy, and thus there are shared decision making processes involved. In such a partnership the partners aim more towards working together in performing various roles and responsibilities and there is the tendency for "the pooling of

resources, such as money, information, and labour to meet shared or compatible objectives,"[11] The 'operational partnership' refers to those that share work and resources, but do not share decision-making powers. In most operational partnerships, there is a substantial level of coordination; however, one partner generally maintains the majority of control. Many intergovernmental partnerships are of the operational type, wherein the departments involved maintain jurisdictional authority but emphasize the harmonization of action. The 'contributory partnership' is not generally considered as a true partnership, because they do not have operational or decision-making involvement, rather the support is usually in the form of funding or sponsorship. Lastly, the 'consultative partnership' is one that involves the solicitation of advice from outside of government such as organizations, groups or individuals, and generally takes the form of advisory committees or councils.

These four categories are ideal type models designed to approximate reality, but they are not perfect models of reality. In practice the extant partnerships may contain elements of two or more of those models. It is possible to have hybrid models that embrace the various characteristics of all models. Furthermore, partnerships are organic entities that may therefore evolve from one type to another.[12] Thus, it is important to keep these models in mind to explain transitional or evolving features of any partnership over time.

(iii) The factors that produce partnerships. The emergence of the partnership phenomenon in the public sector has been in response to a number of interrelated factors that influence public sector management. Some of the more notable challenging factors facing governments include: fiscal restraints, the increased complexity and

interdependence of social issues, an increased demand for greater citizen involvement and quality program and service delivery, the globalization of economies, and the rapid advances in information technology.[13] As a result of these pressures on public-sector management, government has introduced some alternative approaches to adapt to increasing demands including a greater reliance on the use of partnerships.

While the benefits of collaborative partnerships will vary from partnership to partnership, there are inherent advantages to partnerships that motivate organizations and governments to initiate them. There is evidence to suggest that collaborative partnerships are a synergistic means to achieve objectives, resolve conflict and empower disadvantaged individuals, groups, or organizations.[14] Partnerships are particularly useful in dealing with important matters in times of resource constraints. The reason for this is that they facilitate the sharing of resources (i.e., financial, infrastructure, skills and knowledge), they increase levels of participation, they promote shared learning, they improve effectiveness with a broader base of expertise, they encourage the growth and development of institutions, and they foster harmonious relations.[15] Effective partnerships develop relationships that encourage trust, mutual dialogue, commitment, and cooperation. Benefits occur in partnerships when problem solving processes are shared, social capital is built through reciprocal relations, and decision-making powers are diffused amongst partners.

Collaborative partnerships are a synergistic means of achieving various socio-economic goals that would otherwise be unattainable. Due to the involvement with a broad range of organizations, groups and/or individuals, governmental agencies can interact with several participants to formulate innovative and collaborative approaches for

problem solving. This is not to say that governmental agencies can engage in partnerships

without encountering difficult adjustments and potential risks. After all, due to the need

to share decision-making power in partnerships, governmental agencies must adapt their

governance and accountability frameworks as well as their approaches to planning, policy

development, program design, and service delivery.[16] One method available to

governments in mitigating the problematic and risky aspects of partnerships is to be

cognizant of the factors that enhance the quality of partnership relations and the success

of partnering throughout its life cycle.

(iv) Factors that influence the quality and success of a partnership. Due to the wide

spectrum of partnerships, and their complexity, identifying the factors that enhance the

degree of success is very difficult. However, it is reasonable to suggest that the quality and

success of a partnership is largely determined by: (a) the overall effectiveness of its

partnering relations, (b) the clarity of goals, responsibilities and expectations of the

partnership, and (c) the nature of the accountability framework. This list of influential

factors is not exhaustive, but does provide some of the fundamental prerequisites for a

successful partnership which are discussed below.

(a) <u>Partnering relationships</u>. The overall effectiveness of the relationships within a

partnership is a major determinant for the level of quality achieved in that partnership.

Some of the more significant aspects that facilitate the success of a partnership are

dependent upon the following partnering relations - the degree of mutual confidence and

trust amongst the partners, and the level of commitment to cultivate and manage

relationships.[17] According to Vangen and Huxham, "if you are seriously concerned to

achieve success in partnership, be prepared to nurture…and nurture…and nurture."[18] The

partners therefore need to develop a strong willingness to work together, to build trust, to

build strong personal relations, to be transparent, and to adapt to unforeseen situations.

Furthermore, partners must demonstrate a tolerance for sharing power, decision making,

and participation and representation in relations of the partnership with other

organizations. Due the horizontal structure of power sharing, partnering relations can be

altered positively because adversarial relations are replaced with cooperation and trust,

and partners' differences are negotiated rather than litigated.[19] However, difficulties can

emerge from the high degree of mutual adjustment that is necessary to achieve successful

partnering relationships. For example, if the power relationship amongst partners is not

mutually acceptable, the essential component of trust is damaged, or the process of trust

building is hampered.[20]

In partnerships, the reality of the situation is that the elements of trust,

interpersonal relationships, communication and mutual understanding have as much

influence on the success of the partnership as funding or institutional features.[21] Quality

partnerships therefore need to incorporate elements that bolster behaviors that facilitate

innovative yet realistic approaches for its relationships. This includes the need to recognize

the implications that differing organizational, management and traditional value systems

have on the partnership. Partnership consultation, for example, may be hindered due to

differing notions on management schemes. This can be an important factor in cases

involving Aboriginal governments or organizations that are inclined to operate on a non-

hierarchical and 'communitarian orientation,' partnering with other governments and

organizations that tend to be hierarchical and organizational or even individualistic

orientation.[22] Given the different cultural or organizational values and perspectives, it is essential to develop clear understandings of the 'other', promote dialogue, and identify common interests.

(b) <u>Clarity of objectives, responsibilities and expectations</u>. An important pre-requisite for successful partnerships involves the construction of a solid relational framework based on clarity of objectives, responsibilities and expectations among the partners. The sustainability and level of commitment in a partnership is heightened with a more formalized agreement that delineates procedures, structures and protocols. Included in this framework should be a clear specification of the overall objectives, roles and responsibilities of the partners. Furthermore, it is crucial that the partners balance their expectations with their capacities, which as a result, should help identify the risks involved in the arrangement.[23] The partners also need to determine the precise nature of their objectives, purpose, values and anticipated outcomes. In addition to identifying agreed upon principles, the partners need to ensure that planning guidelines, performance indicators, and evaluation measures are specified and implemented in their arrangements.[24]

Achieving objectives and maintaining effective collaborative partnerships is, to a certain extent, dependent upon the leadership of the partnership. The expectation of the leadership role is to formulate and realize a vision, while building consensus and working cooperatively with others to achieve the aims of the partnership. Moreover, maintaining this shared vision is an essential ingredient for the sustainability of the partnering arrangement. For stakeholders in a partnership it is important that they ensure that their values are respected and that the interests of their respective communities are protected.

However, assuming such a leadership role requires sensitivity to a delicate balance of power because the partnership is more effective and sustainable when a level of mutual dependence and power sharing is exercised.[25] To overcome the potential problems of a dominant partner, it is useful to institute approaches that help build capacities for the less powerful partner or partners. Building the capacity of partners is beneficial not only for relations between all partners, but also for the success of the partnership as a whole because each partner can make a better contribution to the shared tasks by accepting greater responsibilities.[26]

(c) Accountability framework considerations. Before proceeding with the implications of accountability aspects to the success of the partnership, it is beneficial here to define the terms 'accountability', 'responsibility', and 'liability'. For the purposes of this report the following conceptualization of 'shared accountability' is very useful.

> "Shared accountability is a relationship based on the obligation to demonstrate and take responsibility for performance in the light of agreed expectations. This means that in intergovernmental partnerships, there are three kinds of accountability relationships:
>   ⬧ accountability amongst the partners;
>   ⬧ accountability between each partner and its own governing body; and
>   ⬧ accountability to the public."[27]

Caiden contends that accountability practices are maximized when the elements of responsibility, accountability and liability are integrated. He defines these key terms as follows:

> "[T]o be *responsible* is to have the authority to act, power to control, freedom to decide, the ability to distinguish (as between right and wrong), and to behave rationally and reliably and with consistency and trustworthiness in exercising internal judgement. To be *accountable* is to answer to one's responsibilities, to report, to explain, to give reasons, to respond, to assume obligations, to render a reckoning and to submit to an outside or external judgement. To be *liable* is to assume the duty of making good, to restore, to compensate, and to recompense for wrongdoing or poor judgment."[28]

Broadening these definitions with an Aboriginal perspective on accountability and responsibility, T. Alfred asserts that:

> "[a]ccountability in the indigenous sense needs to be understood not just as a set of processes but as a relationship….[and] the legitimacy of leaders and of governments is determined in part by the degree to which they adhere to accountability procedures, but to an even greater degree by the success leaders have in cultivating and maintaining relationships."[29]

Partnerships are based on relationships, and may include different organizational cultures, yet as Pocklington and Pocklington argue there are "remarkable similarities" between the basic structure of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal political morality.[30] Moreover, partnerships involve the sharing of responsibility, liability and accountability. Therefore, each partner should be transparent and honest about mutual concerns that have potential to affect the efficacy of the partnership. To strengthen the level responsibility amongst partners, a formalized accountability framework in a written agreement is essential. Accountability requirements for an arrangement include explicit stipulations for reporting, monitoring and evaluation. Because the partnership is non-static process, the partners must be willing to revisit and if necessary amend the mechanisms instituted for the assessment, evaluation, and adjustment processes of the arrangement.

Effective communication, which includes representation and participation in meetings, is important to the reporting and evaluation aspects of accountability procedures. Moreover, the performance evaluations amongst partners need to address the actual achievement of objectives, provide feedback on performance results, and permit for any necessary adjustments. Instituting these types of implementation practices will enhance the success of the partnership. The partners must consider accountability mechanisms as a component of an integrated process. Therefore sufficient information, ongoing monitoring

and credible reporting, partners' compliance to expectations, and institutional learning are all necessary mechanisms for partnering arrangements.

Accountability relies heavily upon the reporting and monitoring aspects between partners. The Auditor General asserts the following preferable features for the reporting requirements of partnerships: "clear context and strategies, meaningful performance expectations, results reported against expectations, demonstrated capacity to learn and adapt, and fair and reliable performance information."[31] As for effective monitoring strategies, partnerships need to consider the nature of the agreement, the capacity of the partners, the complexity of the arrangement, the "specific accountability requirements for each partner" and the level of risk involved in the arrangement.[32]

The foregoing perspectives drawn from the literature on partnerships are essential in understanding the various issues related to other partnering arrangements, such as those established amongst Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizational and governmental partners. In addition to shedding light on the nature, building, and operations of urban Aboriginal housing partnerships, those partnership perspectives will serve as important bases for the fourth section of the report, which discusses the lessons drawn from the case study of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) – Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership. The next section provides the background information on this gaming partnership.

3. THE FSIN – PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN GAMING PARTNERSHIP

Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan experience the highest levels of poverty, unemployment, and incarceration in the province, levels that far exceed what are viewed

as acceptable in the non-Aboriginal community.[33] The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) and the Province of Saskatchewan therefore sought to construct an agenda to enhance socio-economic opportunities by incorporating a legal and regulated approach to gaming on and off reserves. The purpose of this section is to provide the background information on the FSIN – Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership. In so doing, the context is set for the subsequent section that provides an instructive model that is useful for the development of urban Aboriginal housing partnerships.

The Province of Saskatchewan and the FSIN shared financial, social, and political objectives that served as catalysts for the creation of a gaming partnership. The FSIN and Province concluded that gaming was a viable economic development strategy that offered substantial financial gain, which through shared revenue distribution could benefit the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Saskatchewan. First Nations casino development was perceived as a social initiative aimed at enhancing human and social capital in Aboriginal communities. This mutual aim could be realized through the increased employment opportunities for Aboriginal people, and by designating gaming revenues to foster social development in Aboriginal communities. The shared aim of promoting Aboriginal self-sufficiency and self-determination constituted the political objective for the establishment of a gaming partnership.[34]

The jurisdictional issue of gaming on reserve was instrumental in the decision to create a partnership. Rather than risk having acrimonious relations and a potentially counterproductive outcome in 1993 when the White Bear reserve opened a casino, the FSIN and the Province sought a peaceful resolution in a partnering arrangement.[35] Lastly, the Province was cognizant of the immediate need to develop a 'gaming strategy' that

would encompass the regulatory and accountability requirements for a rapidly growing industry. The Province perceived a partnership as the means to achieve the regulatory framework it desired. These socio-economic, political, jurisdictional and regulatory factors provided the partners with the determinants for the development of First Nations casinos. Those objectives led the FSIN and the Province to engage in consultations and negotiations to produce a contractual agreement for the development of First Nations casinos in the province.

Once the partners agreed to engage in a collaborative partnership, negotiations commenced between them to formulate a formalized, contractual arrangement that would specify the accountability, regulatory, operational and relational terms of the arrangement. It is, however, a difficult task to design and implement an accountability framework for an intergovernmental partnership, due to the plethora of considerations required in the construction for an appropriate framework. This is particularly the case in the FSIN – Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership where internal and external considerations contributed to the complexity of the arrangement.[36] The negotiations to establish the agreement between the FSIN and the Province of Saskatchewan were initiated in 1993 and completed in November 1995. The result of these deliberations was the signing of the two fundamental documents of the partnership: *The 1995 Framework Agreement (Agreement)* in February 1995, and *The Casino Operating Agreement* (*COA)* signed in November 1995. These two key documents contain the regulatory, operational, and management provisions for the FSIN – Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership.

The FSIN - Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership has, since its inception, experienced high levels of success in terms of revenues generated, and levels of Aboriginal employment achieved; yet, it has also encountered significant challenges that served to threaten its stability and credibility as a partnership. The challenges that accounted for the partnership's instability and reputation were examined in the thesis case study. By exploring the allegations of the misappropriation of funds, and the responses to these accountability concerns, it became apparent that there were deficiencies in the accountability framework of the partnership. These accountability deficiencies include: corporate accountability provisions, the clear identification of roles and responsibilities of the partners with respect to jurisdictional authority of the probity of revenues, evaluation and adjustment procedures, and communication protocols for the 'agents' of the partnership – Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority (SLGA) and Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority (SIGA). Moreover, inadequate specifications for the mediation process contributed to the partnership's instability when the allegations of financial mismanagement at SIGA were proclaimed in 2000.

The accountability accusations that were made in 2000 prompted the Province to institute specific directives to SIGA to improve the corporate accountability framework. In response, SIGA demonstrated proficiency in responding to directives and progressed forward to surmount the challenges it encountered. This demonstrated its commitment to, and professionalism in, operating within the partnership. Moreover, the partners illustrated their commitment to the partnership by agreeing to a renegotiation of the agreement process, and by formulating a new twenty-five year agreement. Throughout the partnership, the Province and the FSIN dealt with some important issues and

developments that generate important lessons that can be applied to the development of other partnerships between Aboriginal organizations and other orders of government. This is particularly true of lessons regarding the accountability framework of partnership arrangements, which can be useful in understanding partnering arrangements in housing development projects.

4. A PARTNERING EXPERIENCE: APPLICABLE LESSONS FOR URBAN ABORIGINAL HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS

In recent years collaborative partnerships have become very important strategic initiatives for governmental and non-governmental organizations in response to external forces and influences. In fact, some researchers strongly suggest that partnerships are crucial to the development of sustainable, affordable, adequate housing developments for low-income urban dwellers.[37] Collaborative partnerships are a means to institute initiatives that seek to remedy the urban Aboriginal housing challenges. A collaborative approach that includes the participation of community, municipal, provincial, and federal stakeholders is a necessary step towards attaining solutions to the housing problems that face urban Aboriginal people. In Saskatoon, for instance, Aboriginal people encounter barriers such as poverty (affordability), racial discrimination, and low levels of social housing that prevents them from obtaining acceptable standards of housing.[38] To overcome these obstacles it is necessary to consider collaborative strategies that incorporate the efforts of the affected communities, and the public and private sectors.

The practical reality of collaborative partnerships is that they encounter a variety of challenges that can compromise their potential for success. The way that partners in

various partnerships deal with such challenges is instructive for other partnering arrangements. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) – Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership provides a case study that exemplifies a partnership that faced crucial challenges, yet was able to deal with them in a relatively positive and constructive manner to the benefit of both partners. This section will briefly summarize some of the lessons learned from the evolution of that partnership from its inception in 1995 to the signing of the 2002 agreement, and particularly in the way that it dealt with what seemed to be not only a challenge but a crisis.

The FSIN – Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership provides valuable lessons, particularly with respect to the importance of accountability frameworks. Among other things, it underscores the importance of a solid framework agreement, the necessity of monitoring and evaluating the operations of the partnership, and the need to sustain a positive working relationship among the partners. These three dimensions of partnering are discussed in turn below.

The FSIN-Province gaming partnership reveals that in the initial stages of a partnership, the partners must negotiate, plan, and design a solid framework that clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities, procedures, structures and protocols for the arrangement. The gaming partnership displays that given the complexity involved in partnerships this is a very difficult task, and that there were shortfalls in the framework that gave rise to accountability difficulties. It is therefore crucial that in the initial planning stage the partners do the following matters: articulate the partnership's objectives and vision; identify governance issues such as who is responsible for what, especially if something goes wrong; develop an understanding of the risks and risk

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management related to the management of financial and human resources; and develop clear operating principles and procedures.

The FSIN - Province of Saskatchewan gaming partnership serves to illustrate how accountability problems can emerge when the matters related to the roles and responsibilities of the partners, as well as various procedures in addressing any problems that may emerge, are not clearly developed. These recommendations will also hold relevance when establishing a housing partnership, given the multi-dimensional nature of the housing project initiative. For example, due to the degree of variance in stakeholders' organizational experience, their capacity levels will also vary. This will have an impact on the degree of skill level to develop policy, budgets and records, which can have an effect on the operating principles and procedures. It is therefore important to clearly stipulate the roles and responsibilities at the onset of the arrangement; and maintain open, honest, and consistent communication throughout the life cycle of the arrangement.

The FSIN - Province gaming partnership reveals that a solid, written and formalized framework is the foundation required for a successful partnership. It is essential that the housing partnerships outline and prepare policies that strive to attain an overall satisfactory level of a clear, well-defined formal and informal accountability framework for the partnership.[39] The development, implementation, and sustainability of a credible accountability framework of a partnership is a *process* - a process that requires refinement by recurrent communication, adjustment, and evaluation of the objectives and roles and responsibilities of its partners.

The partnership agreement should institutionalize agreed upon mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting the partnership's performance. To enhance the

success of these mechanisms the monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems must be credible by ensuring that they provide reliable information. Moreover, the partnership should ensure that the "capacity of the partners to monitor performance" and to assess the level of risk involved in the arrangement is adequate.[40] It is important to ensure that all stakeholders in the urban Aboriginal housing project obtain the necessary educational skills that are required to properly utilize the fiscal and information management that is agreed upon amongst the partners in the negotiation process. Attaining adequate levels of training may however, prove problematic, as has been the experience in some community based service delivery programs.[41] Nonetheless, in order to facilitate success with an urban Aboriginal housing project, grass roots involvement is crucial, and thus measures to promote educational needs should be considered.

The case study reveals that the FSIN - Province gaming partnership had difficulties with monitoring and reporting in the partnership arrangement that created serious accountability concerns. The Provincial Auditor's 1997 Fall Report identified the monitoring inadequacies of the SIGA operations, yet substantial changes to the mechanisms were not employed until 2000.[42] The lesson to be drawn from that experience is that collaborative, corrective action should be taken expeditiously to deal with accountability problems as they arise. Furthermore, shortfalls arose in terms of the information management and evaluation, which can partially be attributed to inadequate communication procedures and lack of education and managerial skill levels.

To reduce these shortfalls in accountability frameworks, changes must be adopted and implemented. For instance, improved skills and knowledge are needed to adapt to the partnership approach that uses information sharing, joint planning, joint communication,

and different monitoring, assessment and adjustment processes.[43] These aspects of communication and evaluation are interconnected in a partnership arrangement, and should be recognized as such. If communication and evaluation protocols are lacking, for example, the partners may not take the opportunity to present, discuss and act jointly upon the evaluations or analysis of reports. To facilitate success in a partnership, it is important that the evaluation, decision-making and adjustment processes are of joint responsibility.[44] When these processes are managed jointly, improvements and adjustments can be implemented in a timely and effective basis, should difficulties arise in accountability measurements.

Another lesson is that incorporating a learning culture into the arrangement is important because it provides the partners, particularly at the managerial level, with the information to identify and manage such problems if they occur. Forging partnerships that encompass cultural differences found in organizational, management and traditional value systems evokes challenges. Partnership consultation may be hindered due to differing notions on management schemes; for example, Aboriginal organizations are inclined to be non-hierarchical and based on a 'collectivist orientation,' the government tends to have a hierarchical power based structure.[45] Because of these differences in perception and cultural behavior, it is essential to ensure that the accountability and management frameworks are clear, that there is a high level of trust, that commitment is long-term, and that roles and responsibilities are clearly developed to facilitate a successful partnership. Moreover, encouraging a learning culture strengthens skill areas such as joint monitoring, joint evaluation, management, consultation, consensus building, negotiation, and more importantly, an understanding of the 'other.'[46] By adapting to a

learning culture, the partners integrate culturally appropriate information, management systems, and norms into the partnership arrangement; and thus are more apt to avoid destructive conflict in their partnering relations.[47]

The FSIN – Province gaming partnership reveals that the elements of building and maintaining partnering relationships are of significant importance to a partnership. These relations are important because collaborative partnerships are in essence based upon mutual trust, decision-making, power sharing and cooperation, and without these elements the partnership cannot be sustained.[48] The level of trust has implications for working relations at all stages in a partnership.[49] Ensuring that all of the stakeholders are included in the processes of consultation, planning, design, and delivery of urban Aboriginal housing projects will enhance the levels of trust and success achieved in the partnership. The continuity of interpersonal relations built through these processes of the partnership's cycle also lends itself to relationship building, and positive interpersonal relations are also essential for the success of these types of housing arrangements.

Another important lesson that can be drawn from the FSIN – Province gaming partnership is that partners should not underestimate the degree of time, effort, commitment, and resources required to sustain partnering relations in a collaborative partnership. It is important to keep in mind that adjustment is required to adapt to the changes in procedure and practice involved in power sharing, joint decision-making, joint planning, and communication. Moreover, the sustainability and success of a partnership is not only dependent upon the implementation of new provisions; its success is also contingent on the processes of re-evaluation, re-adjustment, and amendment, all of which require the partners' commitment, collaboration and adaptability.

It is also important to take into consideration that by instituting approaches to build capacity for the less powerful partner or partners, the concept of power sharing becomes more appealing and lends to the success of the partnership. This is attributable to the gained sense of trust that occurs as, the partners increase their level of capabilities; the partners are more apt to contribute to the partnership; and risks can be reduced because the partners assume a greater role in shared responsibility. This concept of capacity building in a partnership through horizontal processes, rather than hierarchical processes, is an importance structural element of collaborative partnerships, and as such is advocated by many housing development agencies including the United Nations Centre For Human Settlements (UNCHS).[50]

The final two lessons from the FSIN - Province gaming partnership are: first that although collaborative partnerships are complex and challenging, the benefits of a successful partnership can be substantial, and second that partnerships are dynamic and evolving and need to be nurtured consistently if they are to be successful over a substantial length of time. This discourse is not intended as an exhaustive list of specifications for the development of a model on urban Aboriginal housing partnerships. It is however, intended to provide fundamental instruction for the establishment of a housing partnership model premised on the understanding gained from the gaming partnership's experience.

5. CONCLUSION

It is difficult to determine what specific approach will be most effective in creating a successful urban Aboriginal housing partnership due to the differing local

situations, resources, and actors involved in the project. In general terms, however, there are certain considerations that apply to most urban housing partnerships. Some notable considerations include the following: it is imperative that the housing project is endorsed with a strong social housing policy by the municipal, provincial and federal governments; stable funding to the partnership is a prerequisite for sustainability; experienced executives are important to provide the management expertise required in the arrangement; community leaders are of critical importance as they identify the needs of the community and act as a catalyst for citizen participation; and lastly, inclusive approaches that value and utilize the local community's input are more likely to succeed.[51]

This report represents only one perspective on future suggestions for the development and management of an urban Aboriginal housing partnership. It is not intended to present a paternalistic perspective, but as Aboriginal research continues perhaps a unique Aboriginal perspective may emerge and bring about further reinterpretations on partnering arrangements. It is however, reasonable to suggest that meaningful analysis can be provided for other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partnerships in further research. For instance, it is valuable to explore the complexity of partnering relations by examining the informal rules and structures; and thus, discern how these processes of communication, personal relationships, and leadership are managed in a partnership. It is also useful to examine how organizations overcome and manage their cultural differences to facilitate successful relationships.

Further research that focuses on determining what internal and external complexities are involved in the housing partnerships could be useful in gaining an

understanding of how to facilitate success in the these types of arrangements. For example, the complexity of housing partnerships is contributed to the multi-dimensional interaction amongst community organizations, Aboriginal, municipal, provincial and federal levels of government. Therefore, it is important to understand what facilitates positive relationships and what factors create tensions amongst these stakeholders. Moreover, research that focuses on the broad-based linkages between urban regeneration, housing, and local economic development is relevant and useful to the Saskatoon housing project.[52] While the organizational aspects of partnerships are important, there is also a need in urban Aboriginal housing projects to understand what approach will enhance the local level capacity building (and citizen participation), which are prerequisites for successful housing partnerships. In conclusion, an urban Aboriginal housing partnership must develop a strategy that encompasses all voices involved in the urban Aboriginal housing issue; focus on a broad-based, holistic approach to local development and regeneration; and ensure that the stakeholders of the partnership maintain and share values, objectives, and commitment.

ENDNOTES

[1] Key works related to various types of partnerships include: James Armstrong, "Innovation in public management: towards partnerships," The Journal of Public Sector Management 23 (1992); and Kenneth Kernaghan, "Partnership and public administration: conceptual and practical considerations," Canadian Public Administration 36 (1993); Ronald McQuaid, "The theory of partnerships: why have partnerships?" in Stephen Osborne (ed.), Public – Private Partnerships (London: Routledge, 2000); and David Wright and Alti Rodal, "Partnerships and Alliances," in Mohamed Charih and A.Daniels (eds.), New Public Management and Public Administration in Canada (Toronto: The Institute of Public Administration Canada, 1997).

[2] "Economic Development Index", www.ainc.inca.gc.ca/ead/index retrieved June 6, 2003.

[3] Saskatchewan Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, "Practical Approaches To Issues Affecting Metis And Off-Reserve First Nations People In Saskatchewan", January 1999.

[4] Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), Volume 3, Gathering Strength, (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1996), 365.

[5] 'New Public Management' surfaced in public management as a paradigm shift from the traditional public administration in response to criticisms of heavy control and inflexible management practices. Kernaghan and Siegel (1999) define NPM as "a style of management that borrows heavily from private sector principles and focuses on values like customer service, flexibility in delivery, entrepreneurship, and empowerment." John Allan, "Public-Private Partnerships: A Review of Literature and Practice," Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy Public Policy Paper No.4, 6-7.

[6] Stephen Linder and P. Vaillancourt Rosenau, "Mapping the Terrain of the Public-Private Policy Partnership," in Pauline Vaillancourt Rosenau (ed.), Public - Private Partnerships (London: MIT Press, 2000), 6; and Ronald McQuaid, "The theory of partnership," in Stephen Osborne (ed.), Public Private Partnerships (London: Routledge, 2000), 10; and Maureen Mackintosh, "Partnership: Issues of Policy And Negotiation," Local Economy 7 (1991), 213.

[7] Kernaghan, 61.

[8] According to J. Brinkerhoff (2002)(b), the mutuality dimension of a partnership infers that the principles of mutuality includes mutual trust and respect, and agreed upon values, decision making and purposes. Moreover, mutuality "refers to mutual dependence, and entails respective rights and responsibilities of each actor to the other…." These mutuality dimensions are prerequisites for successful partnering relations. See Jennifer

Brinkeroff, "Assessing and improving partnership relationships and outcomes: a proposed framework," <u>Evaluation and Program Planning</u> 25 (2002) (b).

[9] Brinkeroff J. (2002)(b); and Vivien Lowndes and Chris Skelcher, "The Dynamics Of Multi-Organizational Partnerships: An Analysis Of Changing Modes Of Governance," <u>Public Administration</u> 76 (1998), 320; and Macintosh, 213-214.

[10] Kernaghan, 62-65; and McQuaid, 14-19; and David Wright et al., 267; and Alti Rodal and Nick Mulder, "Partnerships, devolution and power-sharing: issues and implications for management" <u>The Journal of Public Sector Management</u> 24 (1993).

[11] Kernaghan, 62.

[12] The partnership phenomenon encompasses a wide spectrum of types, and thus the classification of partnerships is not limited to the four categories listed. For example, Delecourt/Lenihan (1999) and Armstrong/Lenihan (1999) identify the 'Client-Contractor,' the 'Intergovernmental' and the 'Collaborative' as types of public sector partnership arrangements. Meanwhile, Lewis (2000) classifies partnerships based on the differing relationships between agencies or organizations, wherein the contrasting characteristics indicate an 'active' partnership or a 'dependent' partnership. Further, the OECD (1999) categorizes intergovernmental partnerships based on the form of performance contracting the institutions espouse.

[13] Armstrong (1999), 16-23; and Denis Desautels, "Accountability for Alternative Service-Delivery Arrangements in the Federal Government," <u>New Directions</u> 6 (1999), 23; and Arthur Himmelman, "On the Theory and Practice of Transformational Collaboration: From Social Service to Social Justice," in Chris Huxham (ed.), <u>Creating Collaborative Advantage</u> (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 1996), 58-59; and Rodal et al (1993).

[14] Kernaghan, 66-67; and Chris Huxham, "Collaboration and Collaborative Advantage," <u>Creating Collaborative Advantage</u> (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1996), 8-11.

[15] Armstrong (1992), 23-24; and John Allan, 12-14; and John Hailey, "NGO partners: The characteristics of effective development partnerships," in Stephen Osborne (ed.), <u>Public-Private Partnerships</u> (London: Routledge , 2000), 316-317

[16] Armstrong, (1999), 10.

[17] Armstrong, (1999), 34; and Canada, <u>1999 Report of the Auditor General of Canada</u>, "Collaborative Arrangements: Issues for the Federal Government," Chapter 5 (5.34).   . The concept of 'confidence' within a partnership conveys a meaning that is "based on rational, expectations, typically grounded in institutional arrangements, such as contracts, regulations, and standard operating procedures." See Jennifer Brinkerhoff, "Assessing and improving partnership relationships and outcomes: a proposed framework," <u>Evaluation and Program Planning</u> 25 (2002) (b).

[18] Chris Huxham and Siv Vangen, "What makes partnerships work?" in Stephen Osborne (ed.), <u>Public-Private Partnerships</u> (London: Routledge, 2000), 307.

[19] Stephen Linder, "Coming to Terms with the Public-Private Partnership," <u>American Behavioral Scientist</u> 42 (1999), 47.

[20] Huxham (2000), 297-299; and Siv Vangen and Chris Huxham, "Nurturing Collaborative Relations : Building Trust in Intergovernmental Collaboration," in Stephen Osborne (ed.), <u>Public-Private Partnerships</u> (London: Routledge, 2000), 18.

[21] Hailey, 320.

[22] Ian Chapman, Don McCaskill, and David Newhouse, "Management In Contemporary Aboriginal Organizations" <u>The Canadian Journal of Native Studies</u> 11 (1991), 334.

[23] Denis Desautels, "Accountability for Alternative Service-Delivery Arrangements in the Federal Government: Some Consequences of Sharing the Business of Government," in S. Delecourt and D. Lenihan (eds.), <u>Collaborative Government: Is There a Canadian Way</u>? (1999), 27.

[24] <u>1999 Report of the Auditor General</u>, 5.44 – 5.63

[25] Kernaghan, 74-75.

[26] Rodal, (1993).

[27] Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "Managing Accountability In Intergovernmental Partnerships," 1999, 3.

[28] Gerald Caiden, "Ensuring the Accountability of Public Officials," in Joseph Jabbra and O.P. Dwividedi (eds.), <u>Public Service Accountability: A Comparative Perspective</u> (Connecticut: Kumarian Press, Inc., 1989), 25.

[29] Taiaiake Alfred, <u>Peace, Power, Righteousness. An Indigenous Manifesto</u> (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 1999), 91-92.

[30] Tom Pocklinton and Sarah Pocklington, "Aboriginal political ethics," in <u>Corruption, Character, and Conduct: Essays on Canadian Government</u>, ed. John W. Langford and Allan Tupper (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), 52.

[31] <u>1999 Report of the Auditor General of Canada</u>, 5.76

[32][32] Ibid.,5.83

[33] Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, <u>Saskatchewan and Aboriginal Peoples in the 21st Century: Social, Economic and Political Changes and Challenges</u>, (Regina: PrintWest Publishing Services, 1997).

[34] To achieve the Aboriginal development objectives of self-sufficiency and nation-building, difficult challenges are encountered. It is crucial to utilize a conceptual framework to guide those who employ development strategies in Aboriginal communities. As the product of a five-year research project on American Indian development, the Harvard Project (Cornell and Kalt) provides an insightful volume of comparative analysis that can be adopted as a framework for the design and implementation of Aboriginal development strategies. For an analysis of the importance of economic development for self-sufficiency, nation building and self-governance see Stephen Cornell and Joseph Kalt. This comprehensive analysis of Aboriginal socio-economic development is provided in its eight chapters. In addition to this volume of work, there are reports available from approximately fifty research projects commissioned for the Harvard Project Report series that are available at Harvard University (the complete address is on page vi of the above mentioned volume). See Stephen Cornell and Joseph Kalt, (eds.), <u>What Can Tribes Do? Strategies and Institutions in American Indian Economic Development</u>, Los Angeles: American Indian Studies Center University of California, 1992.

[35] The FSIN and the Province had divergent perspectives on the jurisdiction of gaming on reserve. Many Aboriginal leaders believe that it is their inherent right to exercise jurisdiction of all activities conducted on reserve lands. In contrast, the provincial perspective is that all of the gaming activities throughout the province, whether on reserve or not, are a provincial jurisdiction in accordance to s.207.(1)(a) of the *Criminal Code* of Canada. The FSIN and the Province did however, seek a peaceful resolution to the controversial opening of the casino on the White Bear reserve for the continuance of harmonious relations. The partnership arrangement provided an acceptable resolution for both actors who recognized that the White Bear casino situation was a potentially flammable issue if respectable approaches to the resolution of the jurisdictional issues were not pursued.

[36] One of the internal complexities of the partnership that contributes to its challenges is that in the arrangement the Province is a partner, a competitor (Casino Regina and Moose Jaw Casino), and a regulator. An external complexity, for example, is attributed to the fact that gaming activities in Saskatchewan occur on urban reserves, requires the municipal approval for establishment, and the legal regulation is stipulated in s.207 of the *Criminal Code*, to which the province is responsible to uphold. The nature of the partnership is therefore unique due to its multiple dynamics that involve various levels of government in differing contexts.

[37] United Nations, <u>Cities in a Globalizing World, United Nations Centre For Human Settlements (Habitat)</u>, (London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, 2001), 161-171: and Jeanne Wolfe and William Jay, "Third Sector Organizations," in <u>Housing the Homeless and Poor</u>, ed. George Fallis and Alex Murray (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 214; and Tom Carter and Ann McAfee, "The Municipal Role," in <u>Housing the Homeless and Poor</u>, ed. George Fallis and Alex Murray (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 238; and RCAP, 409.

[38] RCAP, 403; and Steve Pomeroy, <u>Towards a Comprehensive Affordable Housing Strategy for Canada</u>, (Ottawa The Caledon Institute of Social Policy:, 2001), 4; and "A New Beginning: The National Non-Reserve Aboriginal Housing Strategy," <u>www.aboriginalhousing.org</u>, retrieved June, 2004; and City of Saskatoon, "Saskatoon Community Plan For Homelessness and Housing," 2001, 3.
George Fallis and Alex Murray assert that the acceptable UN basic standard of housing "include adequate protection from the elements, access to safe water and sanitation, affordable prices, secure tenure and personal safety, and accessibility to employment, education, and health care." For further details refer to the introductory chapter of <u>Housing the Homeless and Poor</u>, ed. George Fallis and Alex Murray (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 3.

[39] According to Paul Thomas it is essential to incorporate both 'informal' and 'formal' controls in order to maximize the accountability success within public organizations. He identifies formal controls as those mechanisms pertaining to "legal mandates, organizational structures, delegation of authority, rules and procedures, information reporting, appraisal systems, rewards and sanction, and audits." However, the informal controls compliment and enhance the accountability structure of the organization. These include the controls regarding the "communication, leadership, culture, ethics, commitment, and trust" all of which have been identified by the partners as salient aspects of their partnership arrangement. See Paul Thomas, "The Changing Nature of Accountability," in Guy Peters and Donald Savoie (eds.), <u>Taking Stock: assessing public sector reforms</u>, Montreal: McGill- Queens University Press, 1998, 348-393.

[40] Canada, <u>The 1999 Report of the Auditor General of Canada</u>, Chapter 5.

[41] Patricia Fredericksen and Roseanne London, "Disconnect in the Hollow State: The Pivotal Role of Organizational Capacity in Community- Based Development Organizations," <u>Public Administration Review</u> 60 (2000).

[42] Saskatchewan, <u>1997 Fall Provincial Auditor Report</u>, 101. In addition, in the 1999 Spring Report, the Provincial Auditor recommended appropriate evaluation criteria for the performance and control matters at SIGA. These recommendations were discussed with the management at SLGA, and it was agreed that the criteria was 'reasonable and attainable.' However, to achieve greater success in partnerships, it is imperative to incorporate the processes of joint decision making, communication and agreement. It is plausible that if the management at the SIGA were jointly involved in these discussions, accountability measures such as performance and control could have been improved upon with greater efficacy.

[43] Jim Armstrong and Donald Lenihan, "From Controlling to Collaborating: When Governments Want To Be Partners" <u>New Directions</u> 3 (1999), 29.

[44] Armstrong, et al, 33.

[45] Ian Chapman, Don McCaskill, and David Newhouse, "Management In Contemporary

Aboriginal Organizations" <u>The Canadian Journal of Native Studies</u> 11, 2 (1991), 334.

[46] Wright et al, 276.

[47] D.Thatcher, "Interorganizational partnerships as inchoate hierarchies," <u>Administration and Society</u> 36 (2004).

[48] Jennifer Brinkerhoff, (2002) (b) 217-220; and <u>1999 Report of Auditor General</u>, 5.34; and Alti Rodal and Nick Mulder, "Partnerships, devolution and power-sharing: issues and implications for management," <u>The Journal of Public Sector Management</u> 24 (1993).

[49] Lownes and Skelcher contend that partnerships have a life cycle that typically has four stages. At each stage the partnership has differing modes of governance and partnering relations. The governance features shift depending upon the relations, and actions of the partners. Moreover, according to Brinkerhoff (2002) (b), partnerships will deliver varying risks and benefits depending upon the life stage of the partnership. See Vivien Lownes and Chris Skelcher, "The Dynamics of Multi-Organizational Partnerships: An Analysis Of Changing Modes of Governance," <u>Public Administration</u> 76 (1998), 35-51. See also Jennifer Brinkeroff, (2000) b.

[50] United Nations, Chapter 14, 161-178.

[51] Carter, 238; and Brant; and www.aboriginalhousing.org

[52] Patricia McCarny presents some important considerations of local urban improvements in "Considerations of Governance from a Local Perspective: Towards a Framework for Addressing Critical Disjunctures in Urban Policy," in <u>Applying Public Administration in Development,</u> ed. Paul Collins (Chichester, UK, John Wiley & Sons. LTD., 2000), 179-196; and T. Hancock, "People, Partnerships and Human Progress: building community capital," <u>Health Promotion International</u> 16 (2001), 275-281.

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