

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030

Stewarding the Future, Honouring Our Culture



anfca
alberta native friendship
centres association



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ANFCA acknowledges that its offices and 21-member Friendship Centres are located across Treaty 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10 territories, the 22 Districts of the Métis Otipemisiwak, and 8 Métis Settlements, whose histories, languages, cultures, and traditions influence our work, our culture, and our Indigenous ways of knowing as both an Urban Indigenous organization and as Urban Indigenous peoples, where we live, work, and play.



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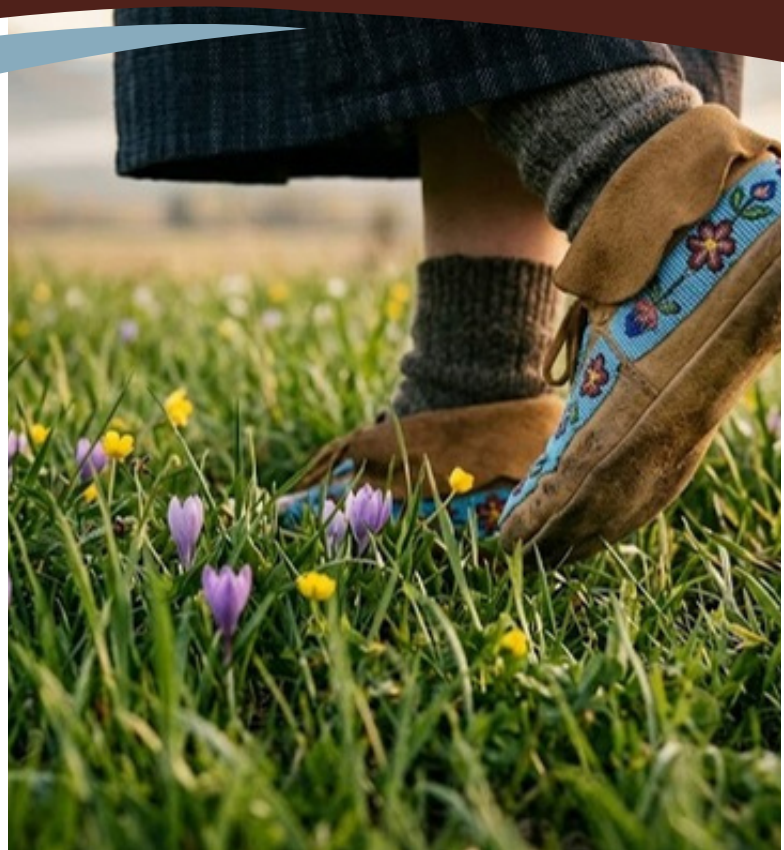
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BACKGROUND

For over five decades, the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association (ANFCA) has stood as a cornerstone of support for Urban Indigenous communities. Established in 1970 as the first provincial/territorial association incorporated within the national Friendship Centre Movement, ANFCA operates as a proud affiliate of the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC).

As an umbrella organization, our mission is to empower and support our active member Friendship Centres, who serve as vital hubs for program and service delivery that directly improves the quality of life for Urban Indigenous peoples.

This strategic plan outlines our commitment to pursuit of a healthy, thriving, and culturally connected Friendship Centre communities. Through strategic leadership, robust advocacy, resource development, and proactive government engagement, ANFCA will continue to amplify the voices of Urban Indigenous peoples, shaping the policies and programs that impact their futures.

DISTINCTION: URBAN INDIGENOUS

Urban Indigenous identity is complex and, in Alberta, encompasses approximately 70 percent of the total First Nation, Métis, and Inuit (Indigenous) population. Friendship Centres honour, respect and celebrate the Indigenous people they serve regardless of status, citizenship, place of origin or residency. ‘Urban Indigenous’ in our context defines First Nation, Inuit and Métis people living off reserve, off settlement, or who seek services outside their home community in metropolitan, rural and remote communities across Alberta. This includes individuals who may also identify as being Indigenous without ties to a specific Nation or community.

This definition is in no way intended to diminish or dispute the rights of First Nations, nationhood or Treaty holders.



INTRODUCTION

Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association (“ANFCA”) has prepared this Strategic Plan as a guide for organizational action over the next five (5) years, 2025 to 2030. The Strategic Plan shares the ANFCA’s vision for how it will fulfil its vision and mission and carry out its mandated roles and responsibilities to support member Alberta Native Friendship Centres consistent of the spirit of the Friendship Centre Movement and ensuring that the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) are embedded in our work.

The Strategic Plan is based on a vision for the future. It describes and organizes actions around seven (7) strategic goals that will lead towards achieving our vision. The ANFCA Board, Executive Committee, Councils and staff all have a role to play in aligning our actions with our goals. The Action Plan, which is a companion document to this Strategic Plan, has been prepared to describe the specific activities that will be undertaken by ANFCA in relation to the seven goals.

ANFCA will be acting in a various of spheres of influence where it can have meaningful impact – including by providing high quality membership services to Friendship Centres, representing Alberta Friendship Centres in places and relationships of advocacy and developing frameworks for new initiatives in priority areas of concern to Friendship Centres.

Our goal is to build on the strengths of our member Friendship Centres, their communities, protecting and promoting our culture, heritage, and Indigenous rights while securing the future of the growing Indigenous population in Alberta so they thrive in all aspects of their lives.



STEWARDING THE FUTURE, HONOURING OUR CULTURE

The theme for the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan captures the dual responsibility that the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association (ANFCA) carries as a provincial umbrella,

Stewarding the Future

To steward is to care for something deeply valuable that has been entrusted to you, ensuring it grows stronger for generations to come. Stewarding the Future represents ANFCA's proactive leadership and responsibility to its member centres and the urban communities they serve.

It means intentionally building a sustainable, vibrant future by nurturing the next generation of community leaders through youth empowerment and mentorship to ensure continuity of care and advocacy. It requires strengthening infrastructure through robust funding, culturally infused toolkits, and strategic provincial partnerships to stabilize grassroots services. Finally, it drives systemic advocacy by walking a shared trail with government stakeholders to shape forward-thinking policies that protect community safety, eliminate exploitation, and address systemic vulnerabilities.

Honouring Our Culture

Culture is the foundation of wellness, resilience, and community identity. For ANFCA, Honouring Our Culture means anchoring every strategy, policy shift, and advocacy effort in the rich, diverse traditions and community-led knowledge of Urban Indigenous peoples.

It recognizes that the true strength of the Friendship Centre movement lies in its ability to provide culturally safe, responsive spaces where people can connect, heal, and thrive. By looking backward to honor the legacy of the ancestors, founders, and trailblazing mentors who built this movement since the 1950's, ANFCA ensures its work remains deeply rooted in authentic identity and cultural integrity.

The Intersection of the Theme

"Stewarding the Future, Honouring Our Culture" means that ANFCA does not move forward by leaving the past behind. True progress for Urban Indigenous communities requires a harmonious balance: using the timeless wisdom of culture as a compass to navigate modern complexities, ensuring that tomorrow's generation inherits a healthy, thriving, and deeply culturally connected community.



Our Vision

Holistically healthy, culturally strong and thriving Friendship Centres communities

Our Mission Statement

ANFCA supports and promotes culturally grounded Friendship Centres that, through program and services, engage with and improve the quality of life of Indigenous People living off- reserve/off-settlement in urban, rural and remote communities.

Defining Guiding Principles

Principles are what ANFCA as an organization serving Friendship Centres at the provincial level “holds close to the heart” and what guides our decisions and actions. ANFCA is guided by our principles as we work together to carry out the mission of the organization. Our principles guide our leadership and governance structures, our administration and staff, and our daily interactions and engagements with each other, with member Friendship Centres and with all our partners and stakeholders.

They guide the decisions we make about how to fulfil our responsibilities to Alberta Friendship Centres and the Indigenous people and communities they serve. Principles provide the basic understanding and ideas that guide our actions and how we interact and work together.

Guiding Principles

Culture is the foundation of ANFCA. ANFCA is committed to:

- Supporting the principles and community-based approach of the Friendship Centre Movement.
- Recognizing the autonomy and priorities of member Friendship Centres that uphold the Code of Ethics and responsibilities of the Friendship Centre movement.
- Building effective, vibrant relationships and partnerships through collaboration and reconciliation.
- Supporting member Friendship Centres in building and sustaining their capacity.



ANFCA STRATEGIC GOALS 2025-2030

Viewing the strategic goals of "Stewarding the Future, Honouring Our Culture" as a tree reflects an Indigenous worldview, where the natural world teaches us about governance, interconnectedness, and sustainability. A tree teaches us that we cannot branch out into a vibrant future without fiercely protecting and nurturing the sacred roots that sustain us. The strategic plan becomes a living, breathing ecosystem:

The Roots (Honouring Our Culture): Grounded deep in the earth, the roots represent our ancestral wisdom, diverse traditions, and the legacy of the mentors who built this movement. They draw up the identity and cultural integrity that nourish everything we do.

The Trunk (Strategic Infrastructure): Representing ANFCA and its member Friendship Centres standing together in unity, the trunk provides structure, resilience, and stability. It ensures the steady flow of resources, funding, and collaborative co-design to support grassroots services across the province.

The Branches (Strategic Actions): Extending outward in many directions, the branches represent our diverse initiatives, from youth empowerment to community safety and systemic advocacy. While distinct, they are entirely interconnected and fed by the same core.

The Leaves (Stewarding the Future): Representing the tangible outcomes of our plan. By nurturing this growth today, we ensure the next generation inherits a healthy, thriving, and culturally connected community.

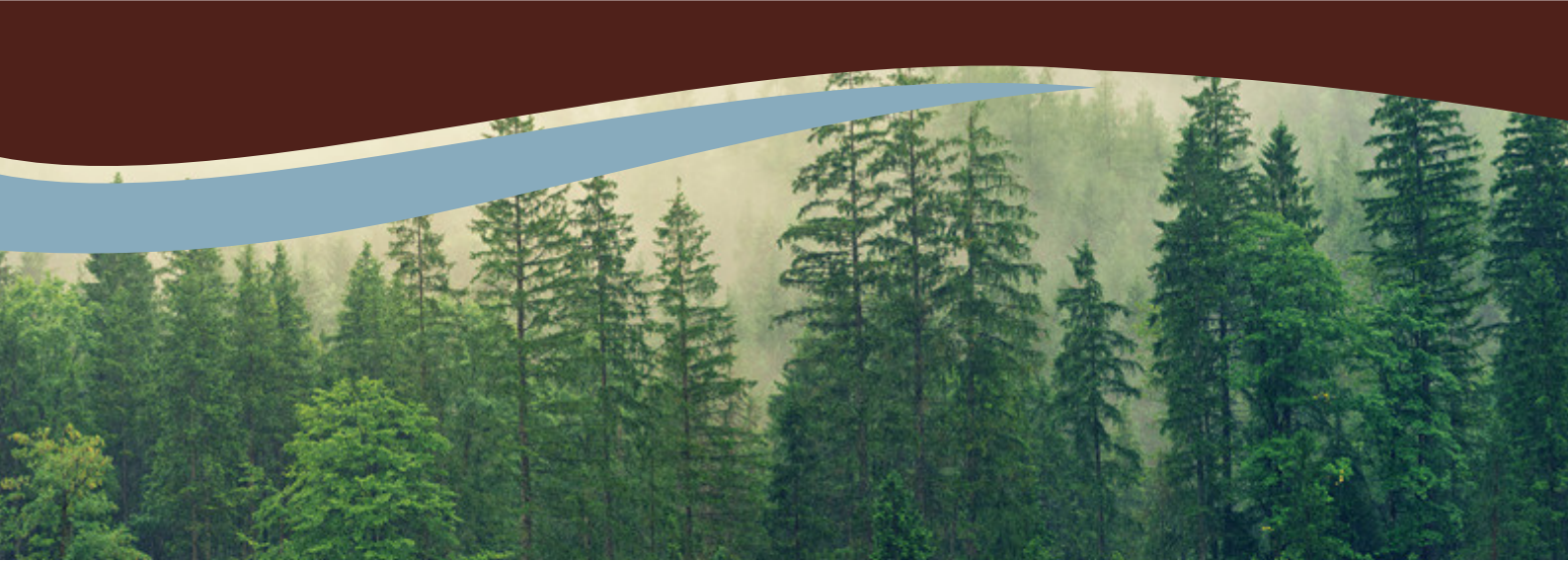
STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIONS

Over the next five years, ANFCA will work to action our strategic goals and identified priorities and needs, and opportunities to increase the generational impact of Friendship Centres in their communities, and the Indigenous families and individuals they serve.

As the provincial umbrella organization, ANFCA supports member Friendship Centres and enhance their capacity to provide effective and meaningful and culturally rich services to Indigenous people living in urban, rural and remote communities in Alberta. ANFCA will continue to work with and build relationships with a multitude of stakeholders, including government and non-government partners. We will advocate for Friendship Centres and their priorities and interests at all levels, and through strengthening existing programs and pursuing new initiatives.



To achieve our vision, fulfill our mandate, and amplify grassroots capacity, ANFCA will focus its efforts across seven core strategic goals. The following pages detail the meaning and significance of these goals and actions. To ensure accountability, this high-level framework is supported by an internal operational plan that maps out the specific activities, timelines, and key performance indicators (KPIs) driving our work forward.



STRATEGIC GOAL 1: CREATE GENERATIONAL IMPACT

Build our bundles for the future through “cradle to cradle” approaches and strategies. Energize and inspire participation and inclusion in the Friendship Centre Movement across all ages, all groups and all Indigenous identities.

ACTIONS:

- 1.1 Foster Intergenerational Leadership and Youth/Elder Engagement
- 1.2 Implement Multi-Gender Initiatives (*Aligns with Goal 7*)

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: INCREASE ADVOCACY EFFORTS:

Uphold and promote Indigenous rights including UNDRIP enumerated rights. Advocate for access to Indigenous culturally safe programs and services, especially in areas of strategic priority for Friendship Centres and identified need.

ACTIONS:

- 2.1 Build Movement-Wide Advocacy Capacity and Resources
- 2.2 Cultivate Strategic Relationships and Formal Partnerships
- 2.3 Coordinate Targeted Campaigns and Direct Support

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: UPHOLD CULTURAL STEWARDSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Deepen our cultural rootedness, capacity, and resiliency. Explore and express what cultural stewardship including stewardship of the land and all life means and incorporate stewardship philosophies into ANFCA governance and operations. Breathe life into all we do through inclusion and alignment with Indigenous culture, worldviews, values and ways of knowing.

ACTIONS:

- 3.1 Integrate Indigenous Culture and Sacred Teachings into All Operations.
- 3.2 Enhance Awareness of Indigenous Identity and Diversity.
- 3.3 Pursue existing and new "Green Initiatives" and Climate Resiliency

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN OUR CIRCLE OF INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE

Create strong, inclusive ANFCA governance based on Indigenous cultural values and teachings, knowledge and decision-making systems, and ways of working together. Ensure appropriate levels and types of participation by Elders and Youth and others within the Friendship Centre community and Movement.

ACTIONS:

- 4.1 Research, Develop, and Implement an Indigenous Governance Framework
- 4.2 Strengthen Board and Council Structures
- 4.3 Expand Governance Training and Future Leadership Initiatives

STRATEGIC GOAL 5: ENHANCE ANFCA SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

Pursue self-reliance through holistic approaches to funding and continue to build the ANFCA social enterprise model. Continue to diversify funding sources and long-term organizational resiliency and sustainability. Grow our Friendship Centre community and increase internal capacity in parallel with the overall strengthening of Friendship Centres, their resiliency and long-term sustainability.

ACTIONS:

- 5.1 Implement a Relationship-Based Fundraising Strategy
- 5.2 Advance Social Enterprise and Revenue Diversification
- 5.3 Strengthen Fiscal Management
- 5.4 Cultivate Internal Talent and Succession Planning





STRATEGIC GOAL 6: INCREASE AWARENESS AND RECOGNITION OF ANFCA'S VALUE, ROLE AND MANDATE

Promote awareness of ANFCA social and economic impact and value. Ensure there is broader awareness, recognition, understanding and appreciation of ANFCA's contributions to social and economic wellbeing in the province of Alberta and to Indigenous Albertans. Celebrate our strengths, contributions and achievements.

ACTIONS:

- 6.1 Execute a Communications Strategy
- 6.2 Celebrate and Promote the Friendship Centre Movement
- 6.3 Quantify and Report on the Friendship Centre Movement Impact
- 6.4 Foster Collective Action and Connection Between Friendship Centre

STRATEGIC GOAL 7: SUSTAIN AND BUILD INITIATIVES AND FRAMEWORKS

Continue to build ANFCA and Friendship Centre capacity through existing initiatives as well as through new planned initiatives in areas of priority for Friendship Centres. Develop sector-specific strategic frameworks, strategies and plans and obtain capacity support from provincial, federal, and other sources in order to advance these effectively.

ACTIONS:

- 7.1 Identify and Prioritize Friendship Centres Priorities and Goals
- 7.2 Develop and Sustain Impactful Frameworks
- 7.3 Strengthen Data Capacity and Reporting
- 7.4 Embed Indigenous Evaluation Methodology Across ANFCA Frameworks, Programs, and Initiatives

IMPACTS AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT



Impacts and measurements will be identified in relation to all strategic goals and areas of action identified in the Action Plan. As part of annual work planning, the ANFCA Board and senior staff will develop more specific indicators of impact in relation to the goals and priorities identified in the Strategic Plan and will track and report on these.

An impacts monitoring and reporting framework will be developed by ANFCA. This will provide guidance not only to leaders and staff of the provincial association but also will serve as a resource that can be adapted for information sharing with member Friendship Centres, members and external stakeholders. The impacts framework will be a helpful resource and reporting tool also for ANFCA to communicate with Friendship Centres, Executive Directors and Boards and to further engage in discussion or priorities and actions to be taken, and adjustments that may need to be made as progress on implementation of the Strategic Plan is made.

Within the impacts monitoring and reporting framework ANFCA will track selected impacts indicators across the province, including under current programs and initiatives and those which are new and may emerge in the next five (5) years. This will enhance knowledge and contribute to improved decision making regarding ANFCA priorities, areas for advocacy, and priorities for establishment of membership services, as well as programs and initiatives.



FRIENDSHIP CENTRE PRIORITIES AND GOALS

The following table provides a high-level summary of the priorities and goals identified by member Friendship Centres for the next five years. These strategic areas focus heavily on advancing community program and service delivery, while simultaneously strengthening internal organizational capacity. Comprehensive details, localized contexts, and expanded actions can be found in the ANFCA Strategic Plan companion document, *Working Together: Friendship Centres Strategic Priorities and Goals 2025–2030*.

PROGRAM AREA	NUMBER OF FCS IDENTIFYING AS A PRIORITY OR GOAL
Housing, homelessness, and transitional support	12
Culture and language	9
Social enterprise development	8
Community partnerships, relationships, funding and outreach	8
Children and youth programs	6
Elder and Senior Programing and participation	6
Facility construction and building expansion/renovation	4
Build FC staff capacity	4
Food Security Supports	3
Educational programs	2
MMIWG2S+ (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2S+ relatives)	2
School Programs	2
Address unemployment through supports (e.g., resume writing, city navigation, income support, and life skills training)	1

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association's (ANFCA) Strategic Plan 2025–2030 is built upon a solid, sacred foundation of community leadership, grassroots engagement, and innovative, culturally rich programming. These gifts are brought to life daily through our member Friendship Centres, serving Urban Indigenous relatives who are striving to create healthy, inclusive, and safe communities.

ANFCA extends its profound gratitude and acknowledgment to the beautiful ecosystem of people who breathe life into this movement across Alberta:

- To the Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers: We bow our heads in gratitude for your guidance and wisdom. You are the living roots of our cultural integrity, keeping us anchored to our identity and ensuring that we walk a straight and honorable path as we steward the future.
- To the Front-Line Staff and Community Helpers: We honor your tireless efforts, boundless energy, and fierce dedication. You are the heart and hands of our centres, acting as modern-day bundle carriers who show up with love, compassion, and resilience to wrap around our families and youth.
- To the Friendship Centre Leaders: We acknowledge your visionary leadership and your commitment to nurturing the next generation of caretakers, ensuring the continuity of safe, culturally vibrant spaces where our people can always come home to heal and thrive.

To all who have contributed their voice, their spirit, and their wisdom to this collective vision, we thank you. It is alongside you that we continue journeying together.





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