

THEORIZING CO-PRODUCTION AND COEXISTENCE: A CASE STUDY
OF MUNICIPAL-INDIGENOUS PLANNING IN THOMPSON, MANITOBA

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Abstract

Given the growing presence of urban-based Indigenous peoples in Canadian cities, the increasing responsibilities of cities with respect to shaping policy, and the shift towards recognizing cities as playing an important role in addressing settler-colonialism, municipalities are well positioned to respond to the current discourses of reconciliation, Indigenous self-determination, and the honouring of treaty relationships. However, the urban planning approaches and mechanisms employed to-date have varied due to the lack of formal responsibilities encoded through policy to guide municipalities, and the diversity of settler and Indigenous geo-political realities. The purpose of this thesis is to better understand the municipal-Indigenous planning approaches that have been undertaken in the community of Thompson, Manitoba, located within Treaty 5 territory and the traditional territory of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, while also contributing to current theorizations of co-production and coexistence.

Two planning approaches, the Thompson Indigenous Accord and the Thompson Economic Development Working Group (TEDWG), were analyzed using a framework developed from a synthesis of the literature pertaining to the concepts of co-production and coexistence. Data for this analysis was collected through semi-structured interviews with municipal government and Indigenous governance actors, as well as a document review. While these planning approaches are evidenced as going beyond traditional mainstream settler planning practices, it is also argued that these initiatives were highly subject to the waxing and waning of political will, in addition to other factors which influenced local configurations of power. Furthermore, the meaningfulness and progression of these planning initiatives has been a non-linear process, one that has been associated with the quality of the underpinning relationships and the degree of Indigenous decision-making power. These findings contribute to the development of more equitable and mutual planning paradigms by illustrating the importance of designing municipal-Indigenous planning approaches in ways that account for these factors, such as by facilitating the continuity of interpersonal and organizational relationships in the face of dynamic urban governance processes.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The study of urban Indigeneity, understood to be Indigenous ways of life and the right to self-determination within urban environments (Denis, 1997; Merlan, 2009; Gagné & Trépiéd, 2016), has become an increasingly important research area given Indigenous peoples continued advancement of ‘modern self-determination processes’, settler society’s limited but advancing recognition of these collective rights, and the growing demographic of urban-based Indigenous citizens (Gunn, 2014). There are a number of reasons why the study of municipal-Indigenous governance has gained increasing attention in recent years. While some scholars have predicated their arguments on the fact that the number of Indigenous citizens in cities is growing with projections of further growth (Hanselman, Dinsdale, & White, 2011), other academics have grounded the importance of their work in the existing inequalities between urban Indigenous and non-Indigenous citizens (Bowles, Ajit, Dempsey, & Shaw, 2011). Although these rationales have some saliency, Indigenous scholars have demonstrated the gap between calls for reconciliation predicated on nation-to-nation relationships and the research and policies which are grounded in individualistic human rights frameworks and which do not account for the distinctive political and legal orders of Indigenous polities (Newhouse & FitzMaurice, 2012; Coulthard, 2014; Gunn, 2014). As a result, recent literature in this area is driven by the recognition of urban-based Indigenous citizens’ collective rights to self-determination (Peters, 2009; Belanger, 2011; Tomiak, 2016).

Parallel to this scholarship, the motivations of municipal actors looking to engage with local Indigenous communities are equally diverse. To date, there has been some academic

literature that has sought to capture the various approaches currently being taken (Chand, 2013; Heritz, 2016). However, meaningful recognition of urban Indigenous governance has been limited within cities since colonial assumptions about where Indigeneity is legitimate presents one substantive barrier (Porter, 2013). Dorries (2012) demonstrates this challenge by examining how one municipal government positioned itself to both claim a recognition of Indigenous title while also reinforcing an exclusive interpretation of settler-state jurisdiction and sovereignty. Other scholars have also illustrated connections between the processes of urbanization and colonization in the context of settler-colonial states. While some of these analyses focus on an historical perspective (Stanger-Ross, 2008), Indigenous scholars have framed the city as an expression of terra nullius and the concept of ‘urbs nullius’ has been put forward to describe one facet of this phenomenon whereby cities and their underpinning settler-colonial logics are seen to subvert Indigenous people and their territorial claims to place (Tomiak, 2011; Coulthard, 2014).

Municipalities and urban Indigenous communities are increasingly looking for more meaningful engagement with one another. In response to this, scholars have put forward the concepts of coexistence and policy co-production as theoretical propositions that can guide planning practice (Walker & Belanger, 2013; Porter & Barry, 2016). While both of these concepts have nuances and contributions to make to the field, each of them maintains that municipal governments can work alongside and with self-determining Indigenous communities in the urban context. While this literature has put forward the normative and future-seeking concepts of coexistence and co-production to advance planning theory, the extent to which it has addressed how to practically apply these concepts has been limited (Porter & Barry, 2016).

To date the literature on coexistence and co-production has largely focused on complementary but distinctive areas of urban planning. In particular, the literature on coexistence

has focused on the area of land-use planning, while co-production has primarily been attentive to municipal policy and program development. While Porter and Barry's (2016) theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions have been significant, other aspects of urban planning such as economic development, policy development, and urban design have yet to be considered through their robust theoretical framework. In contrast, the theoretical underpinnings of co-production have been less robust and the literature does not clearly illustrate how this concept can be used as an analytic lens to examine municipal-Indigenous governance, and as such, lacks transferability (Hays & Singh, 2012). However, this literature has applied co-production to a wider array of urban planning initiatives (Walker, Moore & Linklater, 2011; Belanger & Walker, 2009; Walker & Belanger, 2013).

Within each of these research areas, as well as the broader field of municipal-Indigenous planning, it has been identified that further work needs to be undertaken in order to lay the practical groundwork for how these theorizations can inform planning practices. Thus, the overall purpose of this research is to better understand the approaches and rationales used by municipalities to meaningfully engage (or not) urban Indigeneity; to understand the current and future roles of urban Indigenous governance actors within city planning processes; and, to build on and contribute to current planning theory in order to inform a more equitable planning praxis. Focusing on the northern community of Thompson, Manitoba, this thesis asks two central questions. How can the theories of co-production and coexistence be synthesized and operationalized in order to analyze the state of municipal-Indigenous planning relationships? And what can be learned from the distinctive planning approaches and policy mechanisms that have shaped the community of Thompson in relation to the city-region's Indigenous peoples?

In alignment with these two questions the research objectives were to: (1) develop an analytic framework grounded in the theoretical concepts of co-production and coexistence; (2) identify the municipal-Indigenous governance processes occurring in Thompson, Manitoba; (3) analyze the relevant texts related to the identified planning approaches using the analytic framework; and, (4) analyze the creation and implementation processes and perceptions surrounding the municipal-Indigenous planning approaches. To better understand the approaches and rationalities used by municipalities to engage with urban Indigenous governance, the City of Thompson, within Treaty 5 territory, was examined as a case study. Semi-structured interviews and an analysis of documents were the two primary methods which comprised the overall case study approach. Now more than ever the decolonization of planning practices along with the parallel re-emergence of Indigenous planning are at the forefront of both academic and professional priorities (Dorries, 2012; Jojola, 2013; Matunga, 2013; Wensing & Porter, 2015; Tomiak, 2017). This thesis traces the development of two distinctive municipal-Indigenous planning approaches. In doing so, this research highlights how the meaningfulness of planning initiatives can vary over time and differs between planning mechanisms as a result of being influenced by a number of aspects including: political will, Indigenous agency, interest convergence, interpersonal relationships, and exogenous political factors.

Chapter two of this thesis will review the literature in this research area and introduce a conceptual map and analytic framework which resulted from its synthesis. Both the conceptual map and the analytic framework inform, and are shaped by, the methodological choices presented in the third chapter, which aims to demonstrate the qualitative case study approach used to further understanding how planning practices within the community of Thompson have been constituted and implemented. Chapters four and five present and discuss the research

findings. Each of these chapters are organized around the two main municipal-Indigenous planning approaches that have been undertaken within the community and which continue to shape local governance processes. The final chapter concludes with the primary thesis findings resulting from the application of the theoretically grounded planning framework offering municipalities, Indigenous organizations, and researchers a potential tool for better understanding municipal-Indigenous governance processes in Canadian cities, as well as a robust analysis of the key practices that are occurring within this northern Manitoba city.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores three broad areas of scholarship within the academic literature on municipal-Indigenous interrelationships with respect to colonialism, governance, and theoretical understandings of urban planning. These three areas of research form the basis of this exploration into the intersections between urbanity and Indigeneity and ultimately provide a framework to guide the overarching research questions. The first research area broadly attends to settler-colonialism and how it has manifested within Canadian cities. The second area of research pertains to the interrelated concepts of urban Indigenous governance and self-determination. Third, this literature review analyses the literature pertaining to the theoretical concepts of coexistence and co-production within urban planning scholarship.

2.1 Land and Space: Cities as Sites of Power Relations

“Any dominant form of space or spatiality stands as, and is, power, as it structures particular values about, views of, and practices within the world and reinforces these structures by shaping encounters to match that world” (Barnd, 2017, 13).

In her succinct review of academic research on urban Indigenous identities, Peters (2011) identifies the emergent theme of ‘contemporary municipal colonialism,’ whereby municipal practices regarding decision-making and service delivery in urban areas have denied Indigenous identities as self-determining communities in urban areas. Scholars including Stanger-Ross (2008), Edmonds (2010), Dorries (2013), and Tomiak (2017) have also advanced the idea of colonialism being reproduced by municipalities, emphasizing the necessity for situating the discussion of urban Indigeneity within the context of colonization. With respect to this need, a number of scholars have contributed to the perspective that municipalities and their processes of

urban planning have and continue to have a colonial nature, and have consequently contributed to Indigenous land dispossession, erasure, and invisibility (Razack, 2002; Blomley, 2003; Hernandez, 2006; Barman, 2007; Stanger-Ross, 2008; Porter, 2010; Edmonds, 2010; Freeman, 2010; Tomiak, 2010; Barman, 2010; Dorries, 2013; Egan & Place, 2013; Hoar, 2014; Mays, 2015; Wensing & Porter, 2015; Perry, 2016; Baloy, 2016). This array of scholarship has applied a variety of disciplinary approaches to placing municipalities within the context of past and continuing colonization and has applied a critical lens to the universal utility of municipal planning. Casting municipal planning within a disruptive settler-colonial framework recognizes the collective destructiveness that results from the dispossession and alienation of Indigenous peoples from their respective territories.

One key finding from this body of literature includes the historical role that settler communities have played in the expansion of European empires and the subsequent creation of settler states through the direct dispossession of land and resources. Municipal planning has been enacted in a number of ways in order to contribute to the erasure of Indigeneity from settler-dominated spaces. Moreover, until recently municipalities and urbanization have been traditionally seen as a juxtaposition to Indigenous people and reserve land. Although he was not reflecting on the colonization of Indigenous peoples, Reid's (1990) reflection on imperial town planning is telling:

By the middle of the [18th] century guidelines had been issued outlining the general principles governing the establishment of townships... and a series of planned towns from Savannah to Halifax reflected the importance given to creating urban centres as part of a successful colonial establishment. Such towns acted as the vanguard of imperial expansion and control, centres that reinforced British culture and facilitated further settlement" (30).

To date, urban planning's settler-colonial history is much better documented than contemporary processes of Indigenous exclusion or erasure. Contemporary conceptualizations of settler-colonial cities have been used to theorize how power-laden processes of spatialization are continually enacted and upheld in order to sustain unequal power relations. Summarizing Blomley (2004), Hugill states, "the reproduction of settler-colonial economic, political, and territorial advantage requires sustained iteration in the present and is therefore always vulnerable to interruption and contestation" (2017, 8).

Beyond the physical occupation of settler people in contested geographies, municipal planning tools have also played an essential role in the maintenance of cities as settler-colonial spaces and the development of laws to justify these claims. The development of legislation which has given municipalities relatively limited but influential powers to marginalize the corporeal and political presence of Indigenous peoples dates at least as far back as 1906. In 1906 an amendment was made to the Indian Act, which reflected the parochial perspective that Indian Reserves and 'civilization' were mutually exclusive. Since settlements and municipalities are key to the maintenance of settler-colonial claims of jurisdiction, this amendment gave power to relocate an Indian reserve which adjoined or was situated wholly or partly within an incorporated town or city having a population of not less than 8,000, which is known to have been used by the City of Sydney (Grammond, 2013). This legislation highlighted by Grammond (2013) ultimately enabled the Sydney City Council to pass the resolution that the Government of Canada should remove the "Micmac Tribe, [that had] the most damaging and injurious effect upon all properties adjacent thereto", which enabled the Department of Indian Affairs to relocate the Mi'kmaq community from Kings Road Reserve to somewhere "outside of the city limits, away from the general public" (Membertou First Nation, 2016, 4). This narrative is similar to Shoal Lake 40

First Nation's experience documented by Perry (2016), wherein the City of Winnipeg mobilized federal actors to use the Indian Act in order to dispossess them of their lands. While these and other examples of flagrant dispossession through municipal planning are characteristic of our Canadian history, more recent examples of 'renewed dispossession' are also coming to the forefront of scholarship (Dorries, 2012).

This relationship between the continued colonial dispossession and the establishment of municipalities has been highlighted by authors such as Dorries (2012) who demonstrates the contradictions that permeate municipal-Indigenous relationships and responsibilities. She does this by illustrating how the City of Brantford denies any role in the resolution of First Nation claims to the lands of the Haldimand Proclamation that were actively developed while being held in trust. In this example, the City of Brantford capitalizes upon the self-reinforcing argument that only provincial and federal governments hold obligations to First Nations people given the constitutionally marginalized position of municipal governments. And yet the Canadian state's claims to sovereignty lie in the establishment and maintenance of settler populated territories, such as municipalities, which have displaced Indigenous people and spaces. Thus colonial boundaries are reinforced, and municipal jurisdiction was seen to preside over the territory in question. This notion is furthered by Lowman and Barker (2015, 32) who note how by buying a house in a city, settlers are also buying the idea that the land is their property, and that this, "purchase is a benefit of [their] placement on the inside of the structures of settler colonialism, and also a denial of Indigenous claims to those same lands". Paralleling Dorries (2012), these authors (Lowman and Barker, 2015) go on to note how settler society often responds with violence when Indigenous peoples challenge their unilateral sovereignty. Considering all of this

evidence, it seems that municipal governments have politically mobilized policy, often considered neutral and in the best interest of the public, to disadvantage Indigenous peoples.

Similarly, municipal discourses have been used to render Indigenous communities invisible, in addition to further encroaching upon their lands. For example, Perry (2016) and Freeman (2010) both demonstrate in their respective studies on the cities of Winnipeg and Toronto how settlers have used various communicative tools and historical memorialization to undermine and diminish the perceived existence of Indigenous communities to further the myth of an uncivilized wilderness that was inevitably developed into our civilized settler society. Furthermore, these analyses elucidate the connection between these histories and our contemporary political mythologies, as well as existing political inequalities. For instance, Perry (2016) demonstrates how the process of establishing the aqueduct which supplies water to the City of Winnipeg was characteristic of settler-colonial rationalities. The political forces which culminated in the development of this ‘progressive’ public works project led to Shoal Lake 40’s loss of approximately 3,000 acres of land in exchange for \$1,500. The subsequent alterations to the terrestrial and aquatic environment also led to the community becoming an artificial island without access to a reliable and safe source of water, presenting health and quality of life challenges for the First Nation.

Beyond the role of communicative instruments in supporting the erasure of Indigenous presence, this body of literature has also illustrated how a pervasive colonial logic has mobilized seemingly benign planning tools such as surveying, mapping, naming, annexation, and property law, in order to deny the rights of Indigenous people (Stanger-Ross, 2008; Edmonds, 2010). Sandercock (2004, 118) refers to these tools as ‘spatial technologies of power’ and articulates how their implementation has resulted in the dispossession and exclusion of Indigenous peoples.

Municipal planning and property rights, like law, are often thought of as being neutral and objective. However, an examination of appropriation and marginalization enacted by municipalities demonstrates how private property rights, municipal jurisdiction, and collective visioning for an ethnically cleansed community have contributed to the legacy of settler-colonial cities. Thom (2014, 4) asserts that the concept of private property is used to override overlapping claims and “destabilize and marginalize Indigenous peoples’ efforts in seeking recognition of their property and cultural rights and in reconciling colonial land settlement, particularly when these efforts are inconvenient to private and corporate interests.” Additionally, scholars have also demonstrated how tools like property rights and maps can be politicized to the detriment of Indigenous peoples. Blomley effectively demonstrates this when he cites Kim Baird, Chief of the Tsawwassen First Nation who stated, “tools of land title and other rights of newcomers were mapped over our territories—effectively erasing our presence and marginalizing us to the fringes of our territory, and broader society. ... [O]ther people mapped over our territories without our input.” (2014, 1291)

Although authors including Sandercock (2004) have focused on explicating the historical implication of colonial planning practices, Dorries (2012) asserts that the present continuation of colonialism enacted by municipalities must also be recognized. Porter and Barry (2016) build on this argument by problematizing these instances where modern planning practices reconstruct and reinforce pre-established colonial boundaries as a form of ‘renewed dispossession’. Both Tomiak’s (2011) and Coulthard’s (2014) analyses of cities as terra nullius also explicate cities as sites of unequal power relations. While Tomiak (2011) supports Alfred and Cornthassel’s (2005) assertion that contemporary settlers contribute to the erasure of Indigeneity through invisibilizing the histories and geographies foundational to Indigenous identities, her analysis of the city as

terra nullius is primarily historical. In contrast, Coulthard (2013) conceptualizes ‘urbs nullius’ as connected to ongoing processes of gentrification and incarceration. Together, these studies indicate that colonialism and unequal power relations have shaped the foundations of Canadian cities throughout history, but also that these forces become visible in current planning processes where Indigenous people and settler society navigate their competing claims to space.

However, this colonial legacy has not gone unchallenged, and scholars have also demonstrated how our cities are not only constituted by Indigenous peoples’ physical presence, but also by their ongoing and dynamic Indigenous identities. Tomiak (2011, 24) asserts that urban spaces are vital places for decolonization and the restructuring of power relations and should be viewed as “terrains of struggle over Indigenous access to rights, representation, and urban space itself.” Furthermore, cities have been theorized as places that contradict colonial geographies, which seek to make reserves a place of Indigenous authenticity and cities a place of white assimilation. In particular, Desbiens, Lévesque, and Comat (2016, 83) argue that cities are also places for the reterritorialization of Indigenous identities, where identities can be “renewed, shared, materially embedded, and performed.”

Given the role that municipalities have played in the dispossession and disempowerment of Indigenous people through the establishment and maintenance of settler cities, the question of whether planning processes can contribute to the project of decolonization has been raised. However, municipal culpability, and the foreseeable perpetuity of existing municipal governments, along with the recognition of Indigenous peoples’ inextinguishable group rights (Belanger, 2011), a more fruitful question for individuals working within the complex political realities of urban centres where municipal jurisdiction has been asserted above and in contrast to overlapping Indigenous jurisdictions, rather than in relation to them, is: How might key actors

within municipal planning processes contribute to decolonizing municipal-Indigenous social relations? Additionally, considering how the tools and practices of urban planning can be leveraged by settler and Indigenous actors: Might the role of municipalities in addressing current inequities be to jointly develop new and innovative tools, as well as to change the ways in which existing tools are conceived, interpreted and practiced in order to challenge the logic of elimination that pervades their use?

2.2 Urban-based Indigenous Governance: Self-determination in the City

“For any people, making decisions with respect to matters crucial to its development and to the preservation of its identity is a natural aspiration” (Grammond, 2013, 451).

Following the above question of how municipalities can participate in the amelioration of systemic injustices, some scholars have conceptualized a potential role for planning practices to engage with urban-based Indigenous self-determination. Understandings of Indigenous self-determination, identities, governance, and sovereignty are inextricably linked to one another. The concepts of Aboriginality and Indigeneity are similarly interrelated. These two terms encapsulate the social, cultural, spiritual, territorial, political, and economic dimensions of Indigenous ways of life, and the right of self-determination, which distinguish Indigenous peoples from other Canadian citizens (Denis, 1997; Merlan, 2009; Gagné & Trépiéd, 2016; Radcliffe, 2017). Within the context of urban communities the concept of ‘nested sovereignty’, which Simpson (2014) articulates as the political position of her Kanien’kehá:ka Nation within two settler States, becomes increasingly complex.

Pertinent to understanding the urban context is the reality that Indigeneity and Indigenous rights to self-determination are not extinguished by the choices of Indigenous people to locate themselves in cities. The critical notion that urbanity and Indigeneity are far from being

mutually exclusive is presented by a number of scholars (e.g., Howard & Proulx, 2011; Abele & Graham, 2011; Peters & Anderson, 2013) who demonstrate that Indigenous individuals and communities have a number of conflicting and converging identities. Tomiak clearly states that “Indigenous rights are attached to a person by virtue of their Indigeneity and Indigenous citizenship, not based on their place of residence” (2011, 166). Furthermore, Peters (2011) asserts that partnering with these varying, distinctive, and intersecting identities is an important challenge for municipalities that are seeking to make space for Indigeneity.

While conceptualizing the practice of Indigenous planning within urban centres is often preoccupied with the dissonance between Indigenous self-determination and settler planning systems, some scholarship has examined the continued relevancy of Indigenous planning frameworks and principles for advancing both community aspirations, as well as settler-Indigenous planning relations. In his article on the evolution of Indigenous planning and community development Jojola (2000) demonstrates how contemporary Indigenous planning paradigms have been reconfigured from traditional principles, such as kinship and land tenure. Similarly, Lane and Hibbard use the language of custodial lands to draw attention to the disparate ways in which planning frameworks are conceived through Indigenous worldviews, also noting that Indigenous planning and governance is tied to these “unique social relations and distinct cultural orders” (2005, 182). In *Reclaiming Indigenous Planning* Indigenous scholars Matunga (2013) and Jojola (2013) further articulate how Indigenous planning systems exist outside of and in relation to settler planning regimes, as well as both inside and outside of urban landscapes. Each of these authors speaks to the resurgence of Indigenous planning and the continuity of place-based and kinship principles, while relating these principles to practices such as Māori tribal management plans and a seven generations model for community development.

Meanwhile, the conciliation of settler and Indigenous planning frameworks based on a recognition of urban Indigeneity, and thus self-determination, has been concisely argued for by Belanger (2011), as well as Fawcett, Walker, and Green (2015). Belanger (2011) demonstrates how Canadian court rulings and documents such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) have entrenched and formed a legal impetus for enabling urban Aboriginal communities' right to self-determination, while Fawcett, Walker and Green (2015) outline a morally based logic that makes clear the need for cities to recognize urban Indigenous communities' distinctive collective rights as being different from a typical municipal stakeholder. Drawing on Hanselmann (2003), Silver (2006), and Tomiak (2011) these authors contend that "Indigenous urban governance requires actions and networks among local communities and institutions dedicated to meeting the needs, advancing the interests, and facilitating the self-determination of Indigenous people residing in their traditional territories within urban environments" (2015, 160). This understanding parallels Ulloa's (2011) advancement of self-determination as a process that is enacted through strategies of "constructing alliances, rethinking external processes and reconfiguring internal processes in order to establish relations and hold negotiations with other social actors, thereby constructing a relational indigenous autonomy" (104).

This body of scholarship draws attention to how the terms self-determination, self-government, and self-governance are interrelated, continue to evolve, and have been used in overlapping ways by various authors. The term urban Indigenous governance has become more prominent in urban studies of Indigeneity since conceptually it can be applied in a way that speaks to self-determination, self-government, and self-governance while also providing additional significance. Tomiak maintains that governance invokes a broader understanding

which “connects material outcomes to technologies of government and the production of subjects and subjectivities” (2009, 44). Although she problematizes governance for its neoliberal logic, she also notes within the “new partnership paradigm of urban Aboriginal governance,” actors such as community-based organizations can participate in decision-making through building collaborative relationships with governments, as well as alliances among Indigenous organizations (Tomiak, 2011, 281). Indigenous sovereignty is another concept which is used to conceptualize self-determination and self-governance within the urban context (Dorries, 2012). The writing surrounding each of these concepts has contributed to a deeper understanding of the confluence between urbanity and Indigeneity. Building on both Tomiak (2009) and Graham’s (1999) work, Reynolds (2015) argues that the concept of governance more clearly applies within urban contexts since it accommodates actors such as governments, as well as the private and non-profit sectors which play a vital role within cities.

Parallel to urban Indigenous identities there are multiple understandings of terms such as urban-based self-determination, which can complicate municipal-Indigenous planning processes (Te Hiwi, 2014; Fleras & Maaka, 2010). Belanger and Walker (2009) illustrate that this heterogeneity may present difficulties given the existence of multiple Indigenous actors, organizations, and governments, which all have unique needs and aspirations. This thesis asks: How do urban Indigenous governance actors understand self-determination within the context of their city? And to what extent, if at all, do these understandings align with those of municipal actors?

2.3 Theorizing Municipal and Urban-based Indigenous Governance

One of the key challenges for planning theory, then, is to acknowledge and address the coexistence of peoples with very different sorts of claims to, relationships with and

understandings of place—and each other—and its implications for just, equitable and sustainable decision-making in planning systems. (Howitt & Lunkapis 2010, 110)

Academics have begun to conceptualize how settler cities can decolonize their relationships with Indigenous citizens and communities despite notions of citizen equality and the prioritization of individual rights over the acknowledgement of Indigenous group rights (Walker and Barcham, 2010). Two normative concepts that have been presented are coexistence (Osuri, 2009; Howitt & Lunkapis, 2010; Stevenson & Natcher, 2010; Porter 2013; Porter & Barry, 2016) and co-production (Walker, Moore & Linklater, 2011; Belanger & Walker, 2009). Each of these concepts is presented as being one pathway towards advancing Indigenous self-determination in the context of urban centres.

Both coexistence and co-production, due to their co-constructive nature, facilitate municipal-Indigenous urban governance. For instance, the literature on co-production is predicated on the principle that urban Indigenous peoples have the right to undertake processes of self-determination in partnership with their respective municipalities (Walker & Belanger, 2013; Walker, Moore, & Linklater, 2011). Literature featuring coexistence has acknowledged the simultaneous existence of these conflicting rights and claims to spaces (Porter, 2013; Osuri, 2009; Howitt & Lunkapis, 2010; Porter & Barry, 2016). Both of these concepts are predicated on the perspective that through the meaningful reconciliation of settler cities with urban-based Indigenous rights to self-determination (as a concept), urban Indigenous self-determination (as a process) can meaningfully occur through municipal partnerships with urban Indigenous governance. Although similar in nature and prefix, these concepts each add a unique perspective to the overall discourse surrounding collaborative planning processes between urban Indigenous communities and settler cities. Each concept's normative meaning and implications will be

reviewed further in order to enable a more nuanced understanding of how municipal-Indigenous urban governance has been theorized.

2.3.1 Coexistence of Political Rights in Urban Spaces

“The treaty belt is symbolic of the mutual recognition and independence of distinct European and Indigenous societies... While each travels separately, they are nevertheless joined by the principles of peace, understanding, and strength.” (Dorries, 2012, 13)

The role of planning within municipalities has been defined as “managing our co-existence in shared space” (Sandercock 2000, p. 13). More specifically the literature on municipal-Indigenous co-existence has advocated for the accommodation of distinctive Indigenous planning processes, separate from the spaces of constructive engagement characteristic to co-production (Porter, 2013; Chant, 2013). Scholars Maaka and Fleras (2005, 300) have used the language of “living together differently without drifting apart” to reflect this concept of two coexisting, yet interrelational groups. Additionally, coexistence is characterized by the recognition, accommodation, and support for the existence of Indigenous rights and aspirations alongside mainstream aspirations, which may converge or diverge from one another (Porter & Barry, 2016).

Two key pieces within the body of literature on coexistence have identified the challenge presented by a messy coexistence, conflicting claims to space, and a lack of consensus (Howitt & Lunkapis, 2010; Porter, 2013). Howitt & Lunkapis (2010) expand on this understanding by asserting that these challenges are continually negotiated and renegotiated, rather than settled. This research presents one simplified visual framework for understanding coexistence (Figure 2.1). Within this framework, both relational and autonomous aspects of existence comprise a mutual coexistence. The concepts of the ‘contact zone’ and ‘municipal-Indigenous interface’ are used to understand the relationships between the urban-based Indigenous governance and

municipal government. These concepts are illustrated as the intersection between “the recognition of Indigenous people by settler-states and the planning system itself” (Porter & Barry, 2016, 32).

Coexistence, as it relates to municipal-Indigenous urban governance processes, requires that a number of significant changes take place. For example, it requires that the agenda must not be predetermined when Indigenous peoples are engaged and that the engagement processes are up for negotiation (Porter & Barry, 2016). To more equally coexist it has been put forward that municipalities should institutionalize mechanisms to enhance Indigenous community involvement within the relevant municipal processes, and actively orient themselves to work alongside the differing forms of political authority within urban Indigenous governance processes (Fawcett et al., 2015). Although she does not reference the concept of coexistence, Tomiak (2016) has also argued for the broader recognition that the city is a deeply contested space with competing ideologies and imaginaries. Discourses such as Tomiak’s regarding contested settler cities can be seen as contributing to the theorization of coexistence and its messy and conflict-ridden contact zones. For First Nations that have participated in historical treaty making, Stark’s reframing of treaty relationships as a set of responsibilities and obligations, rather than rights retained/relinquished offers a more constructive understanding of mutual coexistence between Indigenous nations and the Crown (in Borrows, 2017). A number of other relational interpretations of coexistence are drawn on when advocating for nation-to-nation relationships to be upheld. Two Row Wampum is one such allegory employed by scholar Audra Simpson (2014, 32) to illustrate this relationship, while Leanne Simpson (2011) draws on the Nishnaabeg relationship model *Gdoo-naaganinaa*, or *Our Dish*, which speaks to the relationship which promoted political autonomy within shared territories. Such relational and political

accords have a long and complex history within many territories across Canada and speak to the importance of relational approaches for those engaged in urban governance processes. These theorizations challenge the dominant planning theory that has been complicit with the settler-colonialism enacted through city planning. As such, this thesis asks: How can these theoretical conceptualizations of planning inform one another to better analyze planning practices?

2.3.2 Co-production of Plans, Policy, and Programs

“Governments do not give away their responsibility for public policymaking when they engage in co-production. Rather they proceed on the basis that there is value in co-production and shared responsibility for defining issues” (Belanger & Walker, 2009, 120).

Scholarly writings on co-production have maintained that self-determination within the municipal-Indigenous interface entails mutual partnership with respect to the creation of plans, policies, and programs. However, it is important to note that the following analysis of the literature exclusively draws upon articles and book chapters which consider co-production within the context of municipal-Indigenous policy and program formation and application. In addition to establishing self-determination as the normative basis for co-production, this body of literature has highlighted a number of necessary relational elements, which should be present within co-production partnerships. These relational elements, which have been called for by a variety of academics, include mutual respect and recognition, shared responsibilities and benefits, as well as the development of effective communication networks (Walker & Belanger, 2013; Walker et al., 2013; Howitt & Lunkapis, 2010). Another characteristic of the concept of co-production, presented in the academic literature, is that it necessitates meaningful partnerships within every phase of the policy-making process from issue identification to implementation (Walker & Belanger, 2013; Walker et al., 2013).

Walker & Belanger (2013) assert that co-production should not be restricted to any policy or programmatic area; rather opportunities should be explored in a variety of areas, which might include: municipal governance, urban design, economic development, land-use planning, or cultural preservation and promotion. In their chapter Walker and Belanger (2013) further identify that there is responsibility on the part of the settler city to identify and engage with the appropriate Aboriginal leaders, community leaders, and experts given the particular context. Walker and Belanger (2013) maintain that Indigenous partners should be comprised of the appropriate community members, community-based organizations, and political bodies taking into account the specific policy areas, the intended program design, as well as Indigenous political geographies and other contextual circumstances. Through a case study in Quebec, the conceptualization of policy co-production with respect to municipal-Indigenous partnerships was shown to be bolstered by the notions of urban identity, citizenship, and space co-construction (Desbiens, Lévesque, and Comat, 2016). Desbiens Lévesque, and Comat (2016) further argue that through Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples co-production of place and belonging in Val-d'Or, Quebec, the colonial objective of Indigenous assimilation was challenged.

2.3.3 From Theory to Praxis: Municipal-Indigenous Planning

Tomiak (2011), Dorries (2012) and Porter and Barry (2016) have all identified the need to decolonize planning praxis. Some scholars have used the two normative concepts of co-production and coexistence to analyze municipal-Indigenous planning approaches (Walker, Moore & Linklater, 2011; Walker & Belanger, 2013; Porter and Barry, 2016). However, they have almost exclusively focused on using one of the concepts, rather than integrating them both (One notable exception to this is the work of Fawcett, Walker, and Greene, (2015)). The analyses of municipal-Indigenous city planning partnerships have also been conducted through alternative

approaches within the Canadian context (Barron & Garcea, 1999; Nelles & Alcantara, 2011; Nguyen, 2014; Heritz, 2016; Alcantara & Nelles, 2016; Heritz, 2018). These analyses are divergent from the others since they were not informed by a similar set of planning theories or frameworks.

Some analyses have shown that the same processes of colonialism have marked the municipal-Indigenous relations within these cities as the provincial and federal levels of Canadian government (Carli, 2012; Gagné & Trépiéd, 2016). Additionally, these authors have posited that through more recent investigations into municipal-Indigenous urban governance they have found that ideologies of colonialism are pervasive and still relevant to current discussions of municipal-Indigenous planning partnerships. Despite this ongoing legacy of colonization, Porter and Barry (2016) presented an in-depth study demonstrating how the principles of coexistence could be applied as an analytical lens to a variety of cases. Through applying the concept of coexistence, these authors demonstrate how four distinctive cases could each be analyzed systematically in order to inform future planning practices.

The empirical focus of scholars to date has identified a number of municipal-Indigenous planning approaches such as urban Aboriginal strategies, strategic planning initiatives, formal partnership agreements, municipal-Aboriginal advisory committees, and urban reserves (Walker, Moore & Linklater, 2011; Nguyen, 2014; Heritz, 2016; and Barron & Garcea, 1999). In addition to identifying these practices, some literature has also been devoted to analyzing the quality of these policy and governance processes through the analysis of documents and related writings, as well as qualitative interviews. Two principal authors on co-production, Belanger and Walker (2009), illustrate how initiatives, such as the Winnipeg Municipal Aboriginal Pathways Secondary Plan, can be evaluated using the theoretical concept. Theorizations of co-production

were taken further by Walker, Moore, and Linklater (2011), who subsequently applied co-production to two the planning relationships across Manitoban cities. Although there is apparent diversity in the planning approaches being undertaken, based on the limited extent to which they augment urban Indigenous self-determination, Walker (2008) asserts that municipal governments themselves have only begun to explore the realm of planning with Indigenous communities. Furthermore, it could be argued that scholars themselves have only begun to explore the realm of planning with Indigenous communities. This thesis asks: What are the approaches and rationales of municipal-Indigenous urban governance actors for working together? And how can the concepts of co-production and coexistence inform this analysis?

2.4 Room for Growth: A Review of the Research Gap

There is a growing body of literature that demonstrates how Indigenous identities within urban centres take on a variety of meanings, rather than being eliminated (Howard & Proulx, 2011; Abele & Graham, 2011; Peters & Anderson, 2013; and Restoule, 2008). Similarly, Indigenous rights to self-determination are not extinguished by their co-location in cities (Belanger, 2011). Applications and analyses of self-determination in urban settlements are somewhat limited, and scholars have highlighted a number of difficulties related to the actualization of this self-determination (Peters, 2011). Others have posited that the concepts of co-production and coexistence can contribute to the realization of self-determination through municipal-Indigenous urban governance, although they recognize that it is one such pathway (Walker, Moore & Linklater, 2011; Belanger & Walker, 2009; Osuri, 2009; Porter, 2013). Some of these scholars (Belanger & Walker, 2009; Walker, Moore & Linklater, 2011; Porter & Barry 2016) have also used the normative principles of co-production and coexistence to assess the efficacy of municipal-Indigenous planning processes, although these analyses are few.

Within their book on coexistence, one research gap is Porter and Barry's (2016) particular application of the concept to land-use planning. While their book has significant theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions, other facets of urban planning have not been explored. Meanwhile, the literature on co-production has primarily remained theoretical (Walker, Moore & Linklater, 2011; Belanger & Walker, 2009; Walker & Belanger, 2013). Although the normative concept of co-production has been applied to city planning processes by these authors, this literature does not clearly illustrate how this concept can be used as an analytic lens to examine municipal-Indigenous governance, and as such, lacks transferability. Additionally, it has not laid the practical groundwork for how these theorizations can inform planning practices. The proposed research aims to fill these gaps.

2.5 Mapping the Concepts of Co-production and Coexistence

In order to apply the theories of co-production and coexistence to the municipal-Indigenous planning approaches occurring in the community of Thompson, a conceptual framework was developed from this literature review. Concept maps are useful tools for depicting the interrelations between emerging theories and concepts, although it is important to note that the nuances of these complex concepts can be lost when they are delineated in simplistic ways (Hays & Singh, 2012). The resulting conceptual framework depicts the urban governance landscape through a lens of co-production and coexistence (Figure 2.1) and provides a basis for understanding how these theories are applied for analyzing municipal-Indigenous planning approaches.

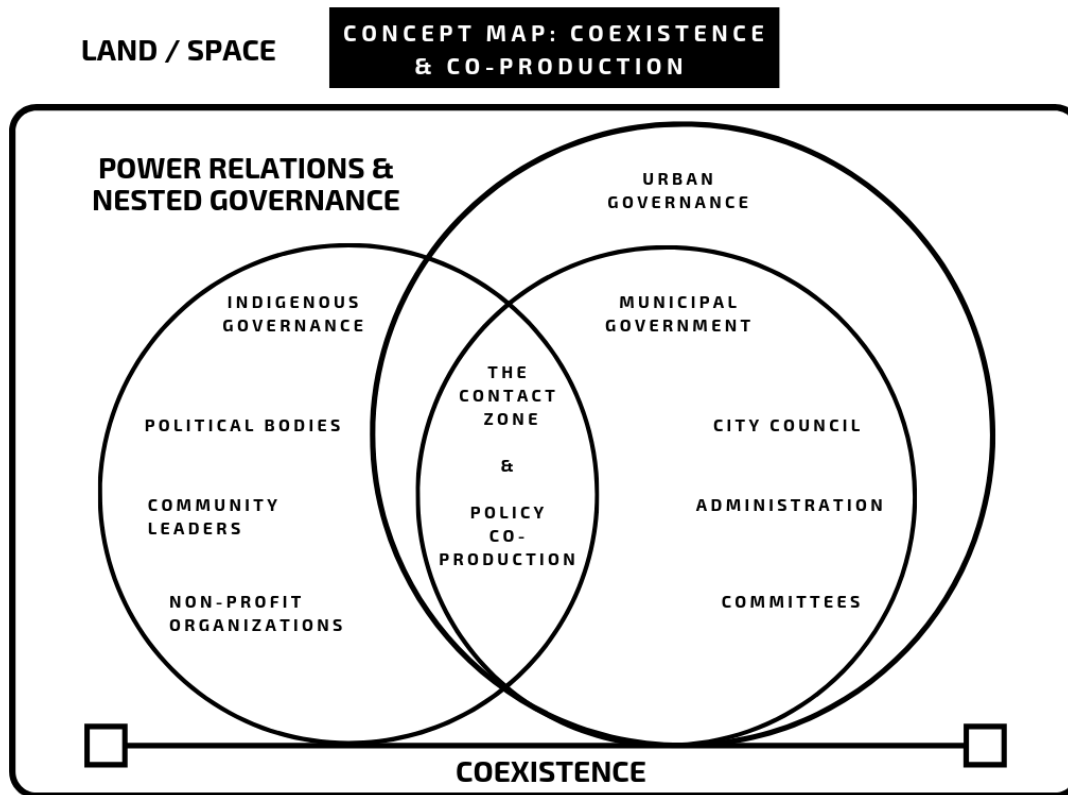


Figure 2.1. Concept Map: The Intersection of Urban Governance and Indigenous Governance

This concept map was used as a reflexive tool for understanding these concepts, as presented by the literature, and for visualizing how the various interlocutors are positioned within these nested governance structures and with respect to one another. This conceptual framework informed the overall research by shaping who and what would be the focus of analysis. The language of municipal government actor broadly captures the interview participants who were either currently or previously a City of Thompson staff person or City Council member; while urban-based Indigenous governance actors included individuals speaking from their experience as Indigenous political leaders, community leaders, or staff within Indigenous governments, other political bodies, or non-profit organizations with varying relationships to the community of Thompson and the surrounding region. The contact zone and the municipal-Indigenous interface, which both attend to the material and social spaces where

collaborative governance arrangements are negotiated and power relations are enacted. The municipal-Indigenous interface and the contact zone were also used to bind the case study by focusing the research on the cooperation and conflict occurring between these two sets of actors at the intersection of the affairs of municipal government and urban-based Indigenous governance. Throughout this thesis these terms are used interchangeably to merge the theories of co-production and coexistence.

While the focus of this research is on the intersection between municipal government and Indigenous governance, the policies and public administration of municipalities cannot be studied without an appreciation that “[u]nder section 92.8 of the *Constitution Act 1876*, municipalities lie firmly within provincial jurisdiction” (Young & Leuprecht, 2006, 4) and that Canadian settler governance has evolved to have a “degree of federal involvement in municipal affairs” (Stoney & Graham, 2009, 375). The construction of federalism and settler-colonialism has led to entangled relationships between constitutionally defined Aboriginal peoples and the federal and provincial levels of government (Macklem, 2001). While these complex relationships are not the focus of this study, Simpson’s (2014) conceptualization of “nested governance” helps to understanding the context of urban governance processes and the existing unequal power relations in urban centres. Instead the focus of this study is on the contact zone where Indigenous and non-Indigenous interests and actions conflict and coalesce with respect to municipal policy production.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter outlines both the research methodology that informed the overall research design of this thesis as well as the particular methods which were employed in order to collect, organize, and analyze the data. In order to address the question of how planning processes and rationales have come to shape the current municipal context, a case study methodology was employed. In particular, this case study focuses on the intersections between municipal planning and urban-based Indigenous governance within the northern community of Thompson, Manitoba. In keeping with case study methodology this thesis utilized multiple data sources in order to create a more holistic understanding of contemporary planning processes being undertaken within the community.

Given the interpretivist nature of these research questions, literature which approaches case study methodology from a constructivist and qualitative standpoint was intentionally relied upon. Additionally, where the case study research tradition provides little guidance regarding data analysis this thesis draws upon other analysis texts which complement the overall research objectives. The following section of this chapter outlines the rationale for a qualitative case study approach, supplementary research design choices, as well as the context, parameters, and limitations of this case study, factors which have come to shape the findings of this thesis.

3.1 Case Study as a Methodological Approach

To address the identified research gap this thesis draws upon scholarship which demonstrates how a case study approach can be employed in conjunction with qualitative and constructivist research traditions (Merriam, 1998; Stake 1995; Creswell, 1994; Ragin and Becker, 1994; and

Baxter & Jack, 2008). The prioritization of qualitative case study literature sources arises from the nature of the research questions being posed. This thesis asks how particular planning mechanisms and relationships have come into being, and how these mechanisms and relationships have developed over time to shape the current municipal-Indigenous interface within the community of Thompson. Thus, the nature of these questions and the precedent set by the literature which examines settler-Indigenous relations necessitates the use of a qualitative research design.

Creswell (1994, 12) defines a case study as a research approach which studies a “phenomenon (the case), bounded in time and activity (a programme, event, process, institution, or social group) and collects detailed information by using a variety of data-collecting procedures during a sustained period of time”. This outline of a case study neatly describes the approach that was taken to study the phenomenon of municipal-Indigenous planning and the intersection between municipal government and urban-based Indigenous governance, a study which was bound by the contemporary urban geography of Thompson, and which occurred through the collection of interview, document, and observational data during the course of two and a half months and a follow up week spent within the community.

Attention to historical specificity, which Ragin and Becker (1994) highlight, was also incorporated into the research approach of this thesis insofar as the case study focused on the historical and place-specific nuances of one community rather than utilizing a comparative approach. Understanding the centrality of place and historical specificity has been identified by Indigenous scholars as an important component of researching or performing research with Indigenous communities because of the diversity of cultures encompassed by the term Indigenous, the complex political geographies of Indigenous peoples, and the centrality of

relational land-based epistemologies. Case study methodology was determined to be positioned as a well suited research approach for studying the local interrelationships between various Indigenous governance actors and municipal government actors, as well as the particular mechanisms which arose from these relationships and which continue to shape current relationships.

The phenomenon, or case, that is the focus of this thesis is this intersection between municipal government and urban-based Indigenous governance in Thompson, Manitoba. This intersection is represented in the concept map, presented in Chapter Two (Figure 2.1). The scope of this study was further refined by focusing on the processes and relationships that have been occurring between municipal government and Indigenous governance actors, while appreciating how these processes and relationships are nested within larger sets of power relations and contextualized by other orders of settler-Canadian government. In practice this meant that, for example, the Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy (TUAS) was examined through a specific focus on the interrelationship between the City of Thompson and the TUAS committee. Interest in the role of the federal government went only so far as it was seen to have directly influenced the local municipal-Indigenous planning approaches. While it is acknowledged that municipal governments and Indigenous Nations claims to place are heavily mediated by federal and provincial legislation and jurisprudence (Simpson, 2014), this research does not attend to analyzing these larger systems.

The selection of a case study methodology which supported the synthesis of a variety of data sources was well suited for addressing the overall research question, since scholars Barry and Porter state, “[a]pproaching both practice and text as discursive is a key methodological tool for studying the expressions of power and struggle in the contact zone” (2016, 72). These

scholars also highlight that methodologies ought to be chosen which can account for how the meaning-making and material outcomes of planning systems are rendered through the production, consumption, iteration, and evolution of texts, individual actions, and social practices. The selection of case study was informed by these considerations, as well as some pragmatic, rather than theoretical, considerations. For instance, both my position as an outsider to the community and a lack of opportunity to perform ethnographic observation contributed to the selection of a case study as opposed to institutional ethnography.

A variety of authors both explicitly and implicitly emphasise that case studies are well suited to explore complex and context specific topics, and that this is one of the research approach's distinguishing features and strengths (Ragin and Becker, 1994; Yin, 2017; Creswell, 1994; Stake, 1995; Merriam, 1998). Case study, theorized as a holistic and contextually sensitive approach, was therefore seen to align with the research objectives of studying complex and contextually sensitive urban governance processes and municipal-Indigenous relations. Additionally, case study methodology has been demonstrated as a fitting research approach for examining institutions and social relationships (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006), and for the field of urban planning (Flyvbjerg, 1998; Thomas, 2016). It follows then, that a qualitative case study design was positioned to effectively address the research problem.

One frequently cited limitation of this research approach is a lack of generalizability as a result of its context specific focus. However, it is argued that this choice of methodology was justifiable given that this case study fits within a larger body of research that has already been undertaken in this area and builds upon existing scholarly theorizations similar to alternative qualitative methodologies. As a result, these findings can be understood in relation to the body of research on municipal-Indigenous relations and in some cases supportive of broader

generalizations while remaining attentive to the unique context of Thompson. This rationale is supported by Meyer (2015) who states that, “[t]he more case interpretations are guided by theory, the more explicit their underlying analytic assumptions, normative biases, and causal propositions; the fewer their logical contradictions; and the easier they are to empirically validate or invalidate.” (2015, 5).

In order to operationalize the concepts of co-production and coexistence, an analytic framework was created from a synthesis of the literature by identifying the key principles associated with each of these concepts. This synthesis was performed using the thematic analysis techniques presented by Braun and Clarke (2006). Table 3.1 outlines this thematic analysis and demonstrates how the research process was guided by theory in order to enable the development of more rigorous analytic propositions. The resulting key principles were then used to form several driving research questions which informed the development of the semi-structured interview questions and the analysis process:

1. To what extent do the identified relational elements of mutual respect and recognition, or shared responsibility and jurisdictions, exist within the rationales and understandings of urban governance actors?
2. Which aspects of urban planning and policy-making (e.g. issue identification, priority/agenda setting, implementation, monitoring/evaluation, partner delineation, types of knowledge used, terms of engagement) have, or have not, been influenced by a redistribution of decision-making power for urban-based Indigenous governance actors?
3. Which civic areas (e.g. governance, urban design, economic development, land-use planning, cultural preservation and promotion) have allowed for the meaningful

engagement between municipal and Indigenous governance actors, and which areas have not been framed as potential sites for urban planning partnerships?

4. How representative has the inclusion of Indigenous community partners been? Similarly, how reflexive and appropriate have these partners been with respect to the civic areas and policy issues being considered?
5. To what extent have municipal-Indigenous planning relations been characterized by a limited recognition of Indigenous rights rather than the creation of space for separate but parallel claims to place?
6. To what degree have municipal-Indigenous planning relations and approaches been iterative and communicative versus fixed?
7. What rationales have informed these relationships?

Table 3.1 Analytic Framework Synthesized from Literature on the Concepts of Co-production and Coexistence

Analytic Framework		
Concepts	Key Principles	Sources
Co-production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to occur on the basis of interest convergence between Indigenous and non-Indigenous civic interests, although rationales may be incongruent. • Offers potential for self-determination to be exercised alongside and in partnership with city hall. Presents one avenue for settler society decolonization. • Is characterized by partnership and shared responsibilities across the policy cycle from issue identification, priority setting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. • Partnerships necessitate listening, learning, and doing, as well as mutual respect and recognition. • Outcomes include expanded representation of Indigenous citizens across varying policy areas including urban governance, urban design, economic development, land-use planning, cultural and heritage recognition and promotion. • Aboriginality becomes an additional lens through which to approach the creation of plans. 	Walker & Belanger (2013)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theorizations are specific to policy and program co-production. • Jurisdiction in policy areas are shared, this may include the creation of new political space. • Indigenous co-producer's include: community organizations, political groups, community leaders (with not always well-bounded territorial and jurisdictional forms). • Requires moving towards a framework of increasing power and decision-making within planning processes Indigenous peoples. • Appropriate governance actors may change depending upon the policy areas. 	Walker, Moore, Linklater (2011)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basis and rationale for co-production is to create space for urban-based self-determination. • Is premised upon the joint fulfillment of Indigenous community aspirations in partnership with non-Indigenous communities, and is founded upon principles of mutual respect and recognition. 	
Coexistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Necessitates that the presence and legitimacy of Indigeneity in cities be recognized. • Re-frames the relations of settler and Indigenous governance as existing alongside one another. • Speaks to a coexistence of collective rights and claims to space. • Acknowledges that claims to space and the construction of place are contested and must be embraced as such. • Rejects stakeholder frameworks for engaging with Indigenous rights and the dominance of Western planning frameworks. • Challenges settler-colonial understandings of Indigeneity and urbanity as incongruent. • Emphasizes comfortability with conflict and the possibility of incommensurability, rather than consensus. 	Porter (2013)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asserts that the terms and conditions under which we currently coexist are fundamentally unequal. • Indigenous sovereignty does not usually refer to coexistence, but coexistence is understood to be relevant to Indigenous sovereignty. 	Osuri (2009)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers to the coexistence of different forms of political authority and a plurality of values. • Requires that the terms of engagement are themselves up for negotiation, as well as the purpose, process, agenda, who is present, and the types of knowledge used. • The ‘contact zone’ is the intersection of the coexisting polities which is characterized by asymmetrical power relations. • Identifies the need for increased communication capacities of planning professionals and systems. 	Porter & Barry (2016)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies gaps in intercultural and ethical competencies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ‘Situated engagement’ resulting from sustained personal engagement leading to challenging and innovating dominant Western processes through the navigation of coexisting values and needs. This may requires work seen to be outside of typical duties and practices. 2. The creation of space for Indigenous spatialities and systems of governance through processes of acknowledgement, negotiation, and collaboration. 3. Acceptance and reflexivity towards conflict and its potential for productivity. • Theorizes more robust space for Indigenous people to advance their collective interests within urban centres. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is understood as the recognition, accommodation, and support for Indigenous rights, cultures and aspirations alongside settler society. • Practically means that Indigenous rights are protected and avenues for Indigenous participation are ensured, and that partnerships would benefit Indigenous peoples in domains and activities from which they were previously excluded. • Necessitates that settler society come to terms with local Indigenous concepts of place, space, and boundaries. • Is theorized as a state of being that is continually negotiated rather than settled. 	Howitt and Lunkapis (2010)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asserts that Indigenous governance actors must have substantive control over their community consultations, and have decision-making power at every stage of the planning process. • One avenue includes the establishment of collaborative governance mechanisms in order to formalize Indigenous partnerships and the redistribution of power within planning processes. • Includes the recognition of racism and Indigenous contributions to urban communities. • May be facilitated by the municipal government through collaboration with Indigenous organizations, leaders, and communities. 	Fawcett, Walker & Greene (2015)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is conceived of as constructive engagement.• Is characterized by equal rights in decision-making.• Envisions policy as compliant with Indigenous practices, rather than Indigenous practices as compliant with existing policies.	Chant (2013)
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3.2 Case Selection: Thompson, Manitoba

The case of Thompson, Manitoba was selected as an ‘instrumental case’, meaning that the community was chosen because of its unique planning approaches and its propensity to reveal promising practices through an exploration how these distinctive mechanisms operated and how governance actor rationales shaped and have continued to shape the municipal-Indigenous interface (Stake, 1995). This study offers a point of comparison since a former study which examined the local political milieu of Thompson, which did not study the Thompson Indigenous Accord and the Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group planning approaches, found that it was “colonialism, with its constituent elements of racism and unbalanced power relations that is acting subtly behind the scenes of contemporary urban Aboriginal public policy in small Manitoban cities” (Moore, Walker, & Skelton, 2011). Thus, this study is revealing of how political cultures evolve, or stay the same, by contextualizing participants’ interpretations of contemporary municipal-Indigenous relations.

The City of Thompson is a northern community situated within Treaty 5 territory and further nested within Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation’s (NCN) traditional territory. Thompson is the fourth largest city in Manitoba with a total population of 13,678 (Statistics Canada, 2016). Due to the city’s northern location and size it has come to be known as the “Hub of the North” given its regional importance as a trade centre and service provider in northern Manitoba (City of Thompson, 2015). The historical role of urban and regional planning in the community can be thought of as being characterized by municipal-colonialism. Kulchyski (2004, 9) highlights how the history of northern Manitoba has “a record of pain and damage that can be attributed directly to the monumental hubris of engineers and economists supposedly working on behalf of the public.” NCN, other Treaty 5 First Nations, and northern Métis people were all excluded from

the decision-making processes which led to the inscription of municipal jurisdiction over the town-site and the establishment of the surrounding Mystery Lake Local Government District. As described by Langford (2016, 370),

Thompson was a planned community built in 1957 following an agreement between the provincial government and the mining corporation INCO. While Indigenous labour was often used to open new mine sites in Manitoba, Aboriginal workers were rarely hired as part of active mining and refining operations.

A recent report on the community has illustrated how systemic racism and settler-colonialism have continued to shape the lives of urban-based Indigenous people, such as through their access to housing (Chartrand & Bignell, 2017). While participants reported that approximately forty to sixty percent of the community were urban-based Indigenous peoples and Statistic's Canada (2016) reported forty-three percent, this composition has not effectively challenged the exclusionary barriers faced by Indigenous peoples as a result of these systemic processes. However, these shifting population demographics alongside increasingly popularized discourses surrounding reconciliation and Indigenous collective rights, and a diminishing nickel mining have led to recent changes within mainstream planning practices locally. This thesis focuses on the mechanisms of new urban reserve designation, the Thompson Indigenous Accord, and the Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group as the embedded units of this case study, and the subsequent analysis of Thompson's municipal-Indigenous contact zone is organized around these initiatives. The particulars of each of these municipal-Indigenous planning approaches will be outlined within their respective analysis chapters.

3.3 Semi-structured Interviews

The method of semi-structured interviewing, which provides data through enabling participants to speak about their experiences and perceptions through a guided conversation, was chosen for

this research (Patton, 2015). Semi-structured interviews were identified to be particularly well-suited for this case study given their conventional usage within this research area (Tomiak, 2011; Dorries, 2012). This method was determined to be consistent with the overall research objectives given its ability to allow for flexibility as well as the comparability of responses. Comparable interview questions were established by using the analytic framework's guiding research questions additionally ensuring that the questions were structured to reflect the key principles of the co-production and coexistence concepts. However, interview guides were occasionally adapted in order to better align with the participants' roles and experiences (See Appendix A: Sample Interview Guide). Additionally, as data saturation occurred for the question of how the Accord and TEDWG were established interview questions were then shifted to focus more on how the initiatives operated in practice.

A combination of purposive and snowball sampling was used in order to select participants with relevant experience and whose work was situated within or tangent to the intersection between urban planning and urban Indigenous governance in Thompson, Manitoba (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & McKibbin, 2015). Overall, 16 individuals perspectives were gathered through this interview process. Of these 16 perspectives, 12 individual interviews were conducted with urban governance actors, and one group interview was conducted with four participants. Five of these participants were municipal government actors, representing both political leaders and administration, one was a provincial government actor, and ten were urban-based Indigenous governance actors who represented Indigenous governments and political bodies, service providers, and community-based organizations. These participants were comprised of individuals who were formerly or currently holding urban governance actor

positions. The attributions used for these participants were determined by the participants themselves based upon the options presented in the Consent Form (See Appendix B).

Interviews were organized and conducted over the course of two visitations to the community of Thompson. The first field visit lasted approximately two and a half months, while the second follow up visit was undertaken in one week. The duration of these interviews ranged from an half hour to one and an half hours and occurred both in person and over the phone. Consent was received to record the audio, and the digital recordings were then transcribed verbatim using the transcription software Express Scribe. As a form of member checking, completed interview transcriptions were sent back to the research participants who were given the opportunity to make or suggest changes to the transcript. Data collection and initial analysis occurred concurrently through this process which allowed for the reflexive adaptation of the interview guides. A process which, according to Hays and Singh (2012), facilitates a responsiveness to emergent themes and allows for researcher assumptions to shift as the research progresses.

As a result of this time spent in the community, a number of informal conversations and formally collected observation data also contributed to the findings of this thesis and contributed to a more holistic understanding of the community, the current political milieu, and the state of municipal-Indigenous planning relations. The informal conversations held with general community members, local academics, and urban governance actors added further context to the formal interview responses. Limited observation data was collected during the two community visitations which were conducted. Observation data was conducted during the National Indigenous Day celebrations hosted outside City Hall, a tour of the NCN community Nelson House, three City Council meetings, and an information session held by the local business

association on the newly underway Thompson 2020 process designed to address the closure of Vale's smelter and refinery operations. These observations differed from the informal conversations held with people since a more disengaged 'observer role' was taken wherein minimal social interactions occurred (Hays & Singh, 2012) During these events, field notes were recorded to capture the initial observations and journaling was undertaken to synthesize initial interpretations and analyses regarding all the data types.

3.4 Document Analysis

Texts, defined by Smith and Turner (2014) are material objects that carry messages and coordinate ruling relations including policy documents, web pages, meeting minutes, public records, bylaws, and reports. Within the area of urban planning these documents codify and shape the municipal-Indigenous interface, as well as being products of urban governance processes. Through examining texts "the social relations extending across, coordinating, and regulating multiples sites and settings of peoples' work" can be explored (Smith & Turner, 2014, 5). As a result, relevant texts were identified and analyzed to further understand the complexities of municipal-Indigenous planning relationships in the community of Thompson.

Texts were identified through an online environmental scan which identified 42 relevant policy documents and news articles including policy documents such as the Thompson Aboriginal Accord document, the Aboriginal Accord Progress Reports, Thompson's 2010-2014 Strategic Plan, the Sustainable Community Plan, the Thompson Economic Diversification Action Plans, and the Thompson Planning District Development Plan. An initial content analysis of these documents was conducted prior to visiting the community and interviewing participants so as to generate more pertinent probing questions. These documents were also returned to

following interviews in order to corroborate what was heard and to better understand the timelines of the events described.

3.5 Data Analysis

The process of analysing these three sets of data was guided by Stake's categorical aggregation and pattern identification approaches (1995). The initial data analysis process began with deductive coding based on the analytic framework, however as these data sets were coded inductive coding categories also emerged and were subsequently applied. The qualitative coding software, NVIVO, was used in order to perform this initial coding.. Stake's categorical aggregation approach was then taken to further refine these coding categories into more refined themes through pattern identification and identifying relationships between the codes. The constructivist approach of this research meant that municipal-Indigenous planning relations were understood to be socially constructed and bound by human subjectivity (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Thus, finding a 'truth' across the participant narratives, collected documents, and observation notes was deprioritized, and instead, the establishment of themes was organized around inter-subjective and relational understandings. These themes were then developed into two main narratives focusing on the planning mechanisms as embedded case study units and were then related back to the concepts of co-production and coexistence in order to integrate the case specific findings with existing theorizations (Scholz & Tietje, 2002). A chronological narrative approach was used to discuss and further refine these findings due to the fact that the planning mechanisms themselves were influenced by their chronological sequence, and that the focus of this thesis was on the mechanisms' progression over time (Schensu, & Lecompte, 1999).

The reliability of these findings was addressed through three main strategies outlined by the case study literature rooted in a constructivist paradigm (Stake 1995; Merriam 1998). First,

the triangulation of multiple data sources was utilized as a means to establish validity by integrating the findings from the interview data, document analysis, and direct observations within the community. The disclosure of researcher bias and positionality was identified another means of establishing credibility. Given that researcher positionality influences data collection, analysis, and the writing of the findings, taking this measure is an important step towards promoting research trustworthiness. As well, researcher reflexivity is one practice identified by Tuhiwai Smith's (1999) in their book on decolonizing research practices.

The primary aspects of my positionality as a researcher were understood to be the intersection of my identity as a female white-settler Canadian, my relationship to the community being researched as an outsider with no existing connections and with no means to establish an insider position, and my educational background in the field of regional and urban planning. While the extent that these aspects influenced the findings of this thesis is difficult to establish, there were multiple passages that I coded where my positionality was explicitly referenced by participants.

You represent an institution in this country that is academia, you represent the University of Saskatchewan. There are certain expectations that I as an Indigenous person have of you. And one of them is a clear understanding of this past relationship, a very clear understanding. And to talk about the R word [racism], because it has to be acknowledged. Everybody has to do something to get rid of that. (Interview 6, Participant 2: Indigenous Governance Actor)

As well as more subtle referenced by statements such as “Okay, I’m going to be a little pro-Indigenous here” (Executive Director, Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation), which spoke to the mediation of identities within the interviews themselves. My positionality as a researcher was also broached in other ways during interviews. For instance, during one interview a participant and I also discussed the challenges of interviewing individuals involved with TIA

and TEDWG. This participant was aware that a gender-based analysis of TEDWG had been performed and that the researchers had experienced difficulty with getting people to speak with them. My own reflections on soliciting interviews was that being a student might have made people more amenable, and that residing in the community for multiple weeks, rather than days, was helpful. However, some difficulty was experienced with respect to capturing relevant and proximal perspectives on municipal-Indigenous relations given the political and staffing turnovers that have occurred since the undertaking of these planning initiatives.

Finally, the provision of a thick description which “provides the reader with a depiction in enough detail to show that the author’s conclusion ‘makes sense’” was used as a method for establishing reliability (Merriam, 1998, p. 199). Efforts were made to provide enough detail about the research process, the community context, the planning mechanisms, and the participants in order to illustrate the phenomenon fully and provide interpretive depth for the reader; however, a balance was also sought out with respect to maximizing the representation of participants’ perspectives and ensuring anonymity (Hays & Singh, 2012).

The objective of better understanding municipal-Indigenous relations in the community of Thompson necessitated an exploratory research approach focusing on how urban governance processes within the contact zone have unfolded, as well as how governance actors have come to understand these processes. Participant narratives primarily informed the findings presented in the following chapters, given the ontological supposition that individuals’ interpretations of these planning initiatives’ meaningfulness are essential to understanding co-production and coexistence; whereas, the document analysis and observational data play a supplementary role in triangulating a cohesive narrative. The following analysis chapters illustrate the findings of this thesis by following a chronological discussion of the three planning initiatives of interest. These

two chapters explicate the emergent themes resulting from this research, the nuanced perspectives across these themes, as well as the relationships between these themes and the concepts of co-production and coexistence.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS: PLANNING APPROACHES AND SHIFTING INTERPRETATIONS OF MEANINGFULNESS

In this chapter I present an analysis of the data regarding municipal-Indigenous planning in Thompson by applying the analytic framework drawn from the literature review, focusing on the normative conceptions of co-production and coexistence. This chapter primarily focuses on the ways in which the Thompson Indigenous Accord (TIA) and the Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group (TEDWG) planning processes have been put into practice and subsequently how they have come to be understood over time. While these two planning initiatives are the primary focus of this chapter, attention is also given to the wider set of planning processes occurring within the community that have ultimately influenced the reshaping of Thompson's municipal-Indigenous interface. Through analyzing participant interviews and observational data, as well as policy and media documents this chapter demonstrates that the two core planning initiatives within the community have been more illustrative of the principles of co-production and coexistence than other mainstream planning approaches to date, but that these mechanisms have also been subject to continual negotiation and contestation. In both the case of TIA and TEDWG, feelings of meaningfulness towards these planning processes were seen to diminish overtime as a result of the confluence between a number of contributing factors. This diminishing meaningfulness is connected to the factors explored in the following chapter.

4.1 Shaping the Municipal-Indigenous Interface

The community of Thompson has had a number of initiatives that have taken place over the last decade which can be thought of as occurring within the municipal-Indigenous contact zone.

These initiatives are relatively unique to Thompson. The TEDWG planning process is one of these unique initiatives, although various economic development initiatives and partnerships have been undertaken in other settler-Canadian cities. The Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy (TUAS) is one mechanism resulting from federal policy which has come to shape the local contact zone, but which has been largely outside of the purview of the City of Thompson, although committee seats are held for municipal government actors and previous contribution agreement arrangements have necessitated their participation as the contribution agreement holder. New urban reserve designation is another mechanism which has shaped the municipal-Indigenous interface, since new urban reserves are in part mediated at the local level through municipal development and services agreements (Gertler, 1999).

In the case of Thompson, the undertaking of this municipal services agreement was reported to have been influenced by a changing municipal-First Nation relationship whereby,

[T]he development of the roads into the outlying community ... fundamentally changed Thompson ... from being a very small, somewhat isolated, certainly economically but ... also in terms of attitude and perspective ... to being a community that is largely dependent on its relationship with Indigenous communities. (Interview 8: Former Mayor)

The work undertaken to have the Mystery Lake Hotel land designated as an urban reserve was also understood by many participants as having influenced other municipal-Indigenous relationships by shifting how municipal government actors perceive their relationships with First Nations, and by demonstrating the economic development incentives associated with collaborative governance arrangements. At the onset of this process the local political climate was recounted by many participants as divisive and overwhelmingly negative towards Indigenous communities:

When we first talked about the urban reserve [some members of the City Council] opposed it. They said we don't want rabble-rousers going from door to door on the reserve. That's what they quoted in the paper. And that had nothing to do with it at all. They were fear mongering, right? And then, of course, the locals picked up on that so they opposed the urban reserve because they visualized it based on the local media. I don't know if it was just hate or ignorance or if it was a combination. (Interview 6, Participant 3: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Whereas, the property's designation has since become a local precedent and a celebrated success story by both the City of Thompson's and NCN's political leaders (NCN, 2016). The interrelated effects of this initiative and the subsequent TIA and TEDWG planning mechanisms is captured by the following media statement which states that, "[i]n the spirit of the accord, Fenske and council have pledged to continue to lobby incoming ministers for an urban reserve with NCN, as they have over the past 10 years." (Thompson Citizen, 2016). This statement is reflective of how the new urban reserve negotiation and Accord processes have come to influence one another and have shifted the local political climate. Although the urban reserve process (beginning in 2005) predated the Accord (signed in 2009) and was the first formal planning process, as identified by participants, to change how municipal-Indigenous relations were conducted, the Accord subsequently became a supportive policy instrument that was operationalized to inform the City's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan and which acted as a rationale for prioritizing City Hall's advocacy towards the designation of reserve status to NCN's Mystery Lake Hotel property.

The TUAS, also initiated in 2005, is "a community-based strategic planning committee, [that] has been focused on improving social and economic opportunities for Aboriginal people living in Thompson", and was established as a result of the federal UAS program (Thompson Citizen, 2017). This committee, which is comprised of government and urban Aboriginal community representatives, now continues under the funding regime of the Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples strategy (NAFC, 2017). This initiative was perceived by participants as

being formative in shaping the local municipal-Indigenous interface, as evidenced by participants' comments regarding how the TUAS was fundamental in establishing relationships outside of the municipal-First Nation economic development paradigm.

And we're often used as an example ... because the one thing that is kind of an advancement with TUAS and the Accord was that at that time you had so many other cities fighting to get people to the table. They had grassroots organizations sitting around it, but they didn't have a city rep, they didn't have reps from the different industries. Whereas TUAS had that already. We had those kind of members sitting at the table whereas other regions were fighting to get those kinds of people at the table, we had a Vale rep, we had a Hydro rep, we had a city rep, we had a provincial rep, we had an INAC rep. We had that already where everybody was kind of fighting for that. And that was kind of the benefit of being a smaller community where we were able to get those people at the table at TUAS, and then we were able to bring those people together at the Accord because we had built those relationships at the TUAS level. (Participant 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Both new urban reserve development and the TUAS have been influential in shaping the contact zone of the TIA and TEDWG initiatives which are the subject of this analysis, outlined in the following section.

4.2 The Thompson Indigenous Accord & the Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group

The Thompson Indigenous Accord (TIA), is comprised of key main components. A policy document which outlines a framework for municipal and Indigenous relationships in Thompson, as well as a table of signatories and partners who meet quarter annually to work towards putting these relationships into practice. The policy document uses high level and aspirational language which outlines a broad set of ethics and mutual responsibilities adopted by the foundational signatories. Specifically the document states that it was “drafted to provide the overall framework upon which the City will build agreements and action plans in partnership with Aboriginal government and peoples” and that the resulting partnerships will be “based upon

a foundation of the shared values of honesty, respect, mutual sharing and contribution” (Accord, 2009). The signatories of this document include the City of Thompson, and the following Indigenous governance actors within the community: Keewatin Tribal Council, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, Manitoba Métis Federation, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, the Northern Association of Community Councils and the Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy. Since its initial establishment in 2009, a number of other partners have signed on to the Accord and adopted its mandate and core set of principles including government, governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and industry. These partners also participate at the Accord table by attending meetings and contributing to the annual report which documents each partners’ respective annual progress towards the Accord goals. Identified as one of “four documents that serve to guide Mayor and Council as they make decisions, as well as administration throughout day to day management” (City of Thompson, 2019), this policy document was also developed as “a way to bring Indigenous issues to City Council” (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor) in order to change how and by whom urban governance was being conceptualized.

The second initiative that this analysis attends to is the Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group (TEDWG). This planning exercise was initiated as a direct response to the announcement of the closure of Vale’s smelter and refinery operations. The announcement of this closure was significant for the community since mining was the reason for the City of Thompson’s and the Mystery Lake Local Government District’s development in the 1950’s, which was done without consultation or consideration of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation’s territorial boundaries or the existing traplines which would be displaced (Stott, 2019). Given the interdependent nature of Thompson’s economy and culture with the nickel mining industry, the

TEDWG planning process way developed to support the community in envisioning and working towards a more diversified and sustainable economy. Following this announcement Vale proceeded to fund the TEDWG planning process led by rePlan, which lead to the development of “a series of Action Plans that provide strategic direction in supporting areas such as Housing and Education and Training and a Regulatory Framework” (City of Thompson, 2019). The organizational chart illustrated below illustrates the process which was taken and the resulting Action Plans and Regulatory Framework documents, as well as the ten stakeholder groups who participated and their relationship to the overall project which included Indigenous political bodies, municipal and provincial government, and industry actors.

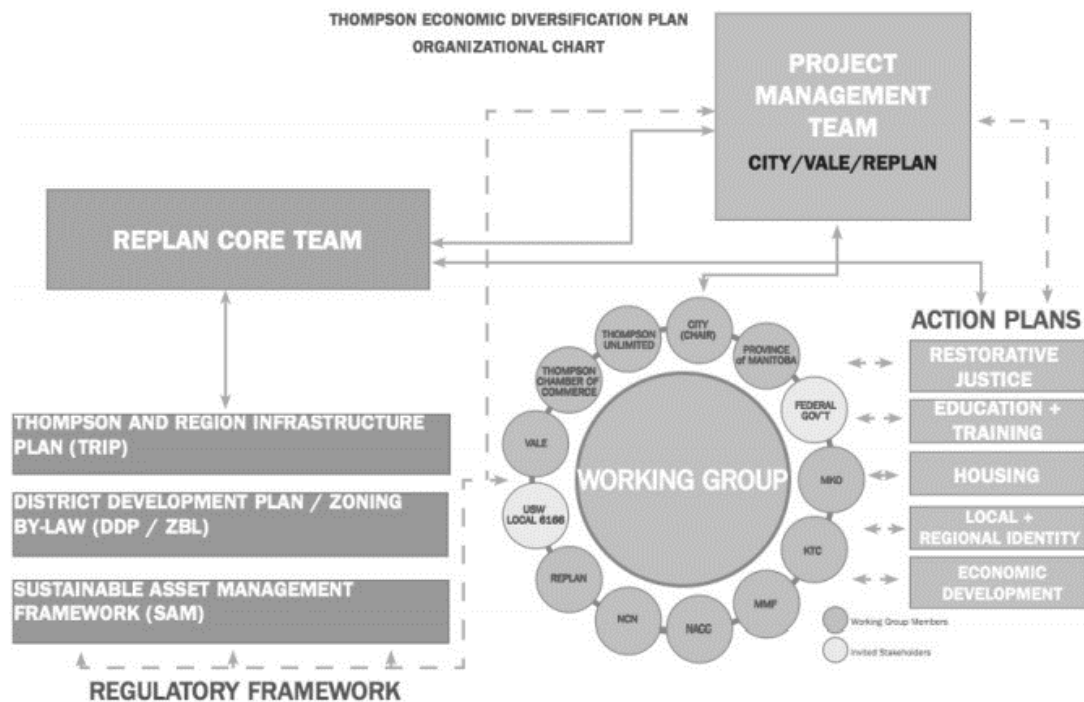


Figure 5.3 The TEDWG Process (TEDWG, 2013)

The TEDWG process was understood as having purposefully built upon the framework set out within the Accord by “better defin[ing] Thompson’s area of influence within the region and the

relationship of regional Aboriginal communities to Thompson” (City of Thompson, 2013), while planning for the reality of the community as “one of Canada’s largest per capita urban Aboriginal settlements” (Drylie, Lafreniere, Lepine, Fitzner, & Beardy, 2013, 33).

4.3 Promising Beginnings and Perspectives on Meaningfulness

Both of these planning initiatives and their collaborative engagement processes represented to many participants a departure from the history of city planning in Thompson, whereby Indigenous representation and decision-making power within urban planning processes has been notably absent. Participants were asked what the level of engagement between municipal and Indigenous governance actors had been and the degree to which Indigenous governance actors were able to participate in these governance processes. The majority of participants responded that each of these planning initiatives was undertaken in a constructive and meaningful way.

TIA was understood to have offered opportunities for Indigenous governance actors to leverage urban planning processes in order to support their own community needs and aspirations alongside municipal objectives:

[The Accord table is] a place where we advocate. ... We have a lot of investors interested in helping the Indigenous community, and that’s where we sort of take action on things like the Truth and Reconciliation that’s come out of residential schools. A lot of training employment programs have come out of those sort of meetings, and we’ve been able to collaborate and create partnerships. ... What the Aboriginal Accord has done, has made it really inclusive Indigenous culture and stuff. ... And we have that discussion now, we were going to come and have celebrations on National Indigenous day, and the city was like, great where do you want to do it? (Interview 3: Executive Director, Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation)

Several participants emphasized how TIA was the product of a collaboration between the City of Thompson and the Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy to produce the Accord:

It was an appendage that really resulted from TUAS. TUAS, actually, it was a fantastic table to sit at ... it was the Urban Aboriginal Strategy that really sought funding to help Indigenize the city to really get that going, to celebrate the cultures that Thompson resides in (Interview 13: Former City Planner).

While the policy document is described as a key municipal document and can be found on the City of Thompson's website, it was evidenced that the TUAS and the other Indigenous signatories played a fundamental role in driving the development of the document. The TUAS role was described as being the "architect and champion of the Accord" (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor) and that "basically the Aboriginal Accord was developed by TUAS" (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor). In addition to the TUAS role, the Accord process was guided by an initial committee which consisted of the original Accord signatories comprised of the regional Indigenous political bodies. As such, the document and table were meaningful mechanism, which created space for the expression of Indigenous political aspirations and developed relationships to follow through on these aspirations.

Similarly, municipal and Indigenous governance actors involved in the process themselves and those whose experiences were more peripheral attested to the collaboration and shared decision-making power that was characteristic of TEDWG.

It was for the first time as a council we said this is the plan we're going to build the future of Thompson on, and Nelson House you have to be at the table, MKO you have to be at the table, MMF you have to be at the table. And that was a huge message that it was important to us that their opinions and their input mattered. (Interview 8: Former Mayor)

Beyond just having a voice at the table, the TEDWG Terms of Reference developed in collaboration with the stakeholders themselves, established a more equitable set of planning relationships. In responding to the question of how their experience of participating in the TEDWG process felt the following exchange occurred:

All these years being a part of [de-identified organization] I don't ever remember being part of anything like that ever with the City of Thompson. Prior to that, I don't know, they never acknowledged us or included us in anything. Even after that process one good thing that came out of it was the partners. We had a project, and we included those partners in that project ... and they came and what we were telling them about our realities, they were shocked and surprised. And here they lived here all these years, but they've never known anything about Aboriginal people or what our communities are like in reality. Things that they have and that they don't have, these were all a big surprise to them. No clue about what life is really like for people in our communities. So it was a learning experience and it educated them. (Interview 6, Participant 6: Indigenous Governance Actor)

And so when you're saying it was a good process, it was sort of that ability to?... (Interviewer)

Yeah to be sitting at the table with the City leaders. And to have a say in the things that they're planning for the city. To have a say. We've never had that before. (Interview 6, Participant 6: Indigenous Governance Actor)

What level of consultation did it feel like? (Interviewer)

It was really- it was meaningful. (Interview 6, Participant 6: Indigenous Governance Actor)

A number of Indigenous leaders and TEDWG participants subsequently co-authored a Plan Canada article with the planner and facilitator from rePlan, contracted to lead the process. This article is in congruence with the above perspective and described the experience of participating as being collaborative and characterized by a more equitable partnership model (Drylie, Lafreniere, Lepine, Fitzner, & Beardy, 2013). Speaking to the partnership model utilized within the TEDWG planning process another participant stated,

I want to believe that the framework would work, or will work. Because it's still very much a concept if you will. And I don't know for sure if that's the framework to be able to really have inclusive approaches to community or urban planning. To me it looks very close to what it should be. And there was so many partners on those tables and working on different parts of that one. (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Collectively these findings suggest that both TIA and TEDWG, in their formative stages, recognized the political authority of Indigenous political bodies within urban governance processes and substantively re-distributed political power leading to a sense of meaningfulness for the participants resulting from the delegation of decision-making power that occurred. While some criticisms exist, which will be explored further, the initial policy cycle stages could effectively be conceived of as modelling the principles of co-production since these initiatives went beyond former findings on the community where Indigenous actors had to “seek accommodation and involvement in existing policy arrangements, rather than participating as co-producers in the creation of new policy arrangements” (Walker, Moore & Linklater, 2011) and instead lead to a re-framing of municipal and Indigenous governance relations as existing alongside and in partnership with one another through these jointly undertaken planning initiatives. Furthermore, each of these processes involved the undertaking of outlining shared responsibilities and values, while TEDWG further established shared geographies through a stakeholder mapping process, which are outlined as necessary aspects of coexistence (Porter & Barry, 2016).

Stakeholder consultation has been criticized for misrecognizing Indigenous peoples by categorizing them as equal to any other interest group (Porter, 2013). This critique is primarily concerned with the degree of Indigenous participation and the level of shared decision-making that these Indigenous stakeholders hold, which is an important criticism of planning that has occurred with Indigenous peoples. While TEDWG used the language of stakeholder and allocated equal input from these stakeholders into the process, strong Indigenous representation was ensured given that five of the ten represented stakeholders were Indigenous political bodies. Additionally, of the two individuals representing the City of Thompson, one of these was

Indigenous Councilor Lafreniere who was “very instrumental in TEDWG, as well and working with [rePlan]” (Participant 8: Former Mayor). As a result, the Terms of Reference principles such as “shared responsibility and contribution, consensus-based decision-making, and equality of voice among stakeholders regardless of factors such as political influence or financial resources” (Drylie et al., 2013, 34) resulted in a process where Indigenous governance actors held substantive decision-making power in partnership, versus being consulted with, enabling a setting where Indigenous aspirations for the community of Thompson could be voiced alongside those of mainstream aspirations, a central tenet of co-production (Fawcett, Walker & Greene, 2015).

Participants articulated the influence that Indigenous perspectives had on the final TEDWG Action Plans, as one example of their meaningfulness. In particular the Restorative Justice Action Plan, which built off of the work that Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak had already been undertaking in this area.

And I mean one of those things that is evidenced by that ... it was one of the first action plans that came out of the TEDWG process, the restorative justice facility. ... It really is the number of groups that are around the table, a lot of those Indigenous groups. We all came to a consensus that the type of facility ... to best serve our community and region was a restorative justice facility. As opposed to a jail. ... So having everyone on the same page and everybody has consensus that was the first action that we developed. It sort of speaks volume to that interrelationship that we have with a number of the Indigenous and other stakeholders in this community. (Interview 2: City Manager)

It wasn't about promoting [corrections], but trying to provide a place that was going to hopefully be able to give people a running chance when they got out. Not to come out worse, which is all that we're seeing in the system now. And just the incarceration rates, you know how high they were and how high they probably still are. And to provide that kind of facility. Like it makes no sense, they transport everybody to the south and yet there's so many from the north. It's not a point anybody wants to brag about, but that's the reality. And you know the opportunity to integrate back into the community in a healthy way is just not there, not right now. And I think a facility like that would've gave people a chance. (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Such statements reflected how the TEDWG process enabled the collaborative identification of areas of mutual concern which fit within the larger framework of economic diversification.

Beyond the initial establishment of these planning processes and their collaborative undertaking, the subsequent uptake of these documents by governance actors also contributed to these feelings of meaningfulness. Speaking as someone not directly involved with the TEDWG planning process, one participant commented on the importance of the documents within the community “but TEDWG is what always comes up. And that’s kind of the hedge stone” (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor). This uptake spoke to the ownership that was generated amongst governance actors, which is in part attributable to the level of shared decision-making power within this process. The value of the TIA annual reports within the community was also spoken to:

I mean I know that the Building Bridges to Reconciliation report, the TIA, the Thompson Indigenous Accord, those are produced and you have multiple partners. . . . You know, when you produce these reports it kind of makes a statement that the organizations are in support- and the City of Thompson leads that process. (Interview 13: Former City Planner)

However, two participants’ perceptions of the TIA and TEDWG processes were predominantly negative. These criticisms are important outliers and offer constructive thoughts regarding the limitations of municipal planning processes in Thompson and are reflective of the challenges that scholars such Porter and Barry (2016) underscore regarding the importance of maintaining a critical reflexivity towards planning approaches that cast themselves as consensus-based, since in reality existing power distributions, contextual factors, and group inter-dynamics present practical challenges in achieving true unanimity and the full inclusion of all partners.

Although the TEDWG Terms of Reference outlined that the stakeholder groups would transfer the information to and from their constituent communities under the principle of informed participation (City of Thompson, n.d., 1), one of the main criticisms of the undertaking of the TEDWG planning process was a lack of capacity and support to ensure that those whom they were supposed to be representing at the table could be engaged. Contrasting this capacity with the notion of meaningful consultation this participant stated,

And generally that also means capacity for us to be able to make sure our citizens ... can participate in a meaningful way. The City and TEDWG, none of that happened. That's not consultation, that's not being involved. It's no different to me if I say to you, "I'm going to have a foot race, and anybody can enter. I don't care if you have a broken leg or you're in a wheelchair, I'll give you the opportunity". How fair is that if it's the same run for everybody? And to me, that's the way the control is. (Interview 7: Manitoba Metis Federation, Thompson Region Vice-President)

However, this participant also perceived that First Nation political bodies achieved more inclusive participation and recognition than the Métis at the TEDWG table and within Thompson's urban governance processes more generally. Certainly, while the Manitoba Métis Federation was identified by municipal government actors as an important Indigenous governance actor, economic development with First Nations was a prominent rationale and source of interest convergence.

This perspective was unique since other research participants did not express dissatisfaction with TEDWG's emphasis on engagement with political leadership, although they did note that generally municipal lead community engagement has not been done in a way that encourages urban-based Indigenous people to attend or feel like they have a voice.

They don't realize that a lot of Aboriginal people don't feel welcome in schools. They don't feel it's safe, they don't feel it's somewhere they want to go. And even just the way they are done. And you are definitely going to have Aboriginal people feeling uncomfortable going to an event that they see as more kind of white-settler and not part

of who they are, because they're not made to feel that they're part of it. (Participant 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

This quote is significant because it demonstrates some of the considerations that could be taken including but not limited to the location, the processes of engagement, and who is seen as the drivers of the engagement process. Both of these criticisms taken together are reflective of another participant's perspective that there is a gap between the self-determination that might be occurring within the community.

And so you kind of have that population that's the professionals and the leaders and strong voices. But then there's also kind of that population that are the lower income and that are really struggling. ... there's been a lot of healing, but there's still a lot of hurting people over there and a lot of maybe disparity between the levels. ... So I think this part [the Indigenous professional and political leadership] is that self-determination is happening and it is shaping the city because it's more vocal. ... I think that with the organizations on that level ... they have representation in terms of the Accord table and I think they're listened to and heard and stuff. But I think at a grassroots level with just regular people - and I don't know the experience of how extreme racism is within the City. (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

One limitation of this study was that interviews did not capture the perspectives of these urban-based Indigenous communities; however, this theme speaks to the challenges of representative legitimacy and effecting self-determination for Indigenous communities within complex urban settings.

While the transfer of decision-making power and relationship building which occurred were one lens which participants considered substantivity and meaningfulness through, participants also assessed the TIA and TEDWG processes based upon the tangible outcomes and projects that have occurred within the community as a result of these initiatives. Housing and education were two policy areas which were seen to have experienced the most tangible change as a result of these policy documents and their associated relationships. Participants spoke to a

number of examples including the creation of the Thompson Housing Agency, investments in Housing First modelled projects, affordable housing, the establishment of zoning which supports these housing projects.

One of the things that became a real success for us was the ability to get commitments on and support for housing initiatives. ... [The City of Thompson] gave an in-kind contribution, they did all they could to have the land rezoned in some cases where it wasn't zoned properly. Where they could have given us a hard time if they weren't real partners or if they didn't want us to build. [The UCN Campus] alone I think without Aboriginal partners this wouldn't have happened. (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor)

So on the education side of things what resulted was the development of the University College of the North Campus. It was an 82 million dollar investment in our community. Logistically locating it next to our Vale Regional Rec Centre and the R.D. Parker High school made a really good fit. And then the other component added to that was for housing to be on-site. (Interview 4: City Mayor)

Both municipal and Indigenous governance actor respondents also identified the indirect ways in which these planning initiatives have influenced decision-making at City Hall:

Well the Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal might be one example, it was trying to beautify the community. That building over there with the nice drawing on the side, that was funded by the TNRC and I didn't realize how closely they were working with the city. ... And that was an important role, they could help or support people in working through those red tapes. (Interview 7: MMF Thompson Region Vice-President)

Like for instance this is a good thing from the city, the Cold Weather Policy. ... And then KTC also gets involved because they have transportation services. So when it dips below a certain temperature what they do is they provide rides or transportation, they open up the community centres so that people can at least have a safe place to sleep. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

The document analysis also revealed that a number of other projects within the community have been influenced by these planning initiatives including the development of a Cultural Proficiency training program "led by the School District of Mystery Lake [with]

participation from all of the Accord partners”, as well as the development of representational workforce strategies by Accord partners and major regional employers: the Northern Regional Health Authority, Vale, and Manitoba Hydro (northroots, 2015, 10). A tri-partnership between the City of Thompson, Manitoba Hydro, and Men are Part of the Solution (a local organization that provides transitional housing and programming to support men in building healthy relationships with themselves, their partners, families, and communities) to provide work in the form of cleaning the Burntwood River was attributed to the Accord relationships (Thompson Citizen, 2014). More recently the establishment of a trio of scholarships for high school students from Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Pimicikamak Cree Nation and the Métis [N]ation, and that honours Indigenous historical figures who have contributed to the surrounding community was stated as having “emerged as a result of the Thompson Aboriginal Accord” (Nation Talk, 2018).

Collectively, participants’ statements and these media releases demonstrate the scope and wide ranging impact that both TIA and TEDWG have had directly and indirectly within the community of Thompson. Taken altogether the perspectives that better relationships were cultivated, that Indigenous governance actors were able to assert decision-making authority within governance processes, and that this work led to tangible outcomes within the community supports the finding that TIA and TEDWG were effective mechanisms which were characteristic of co-production and coexistence. However, the results of this analysis also demonstrate that the mechanisms themselves were only one component of facilitating more equitable and collaborative relations and that feelings of meaningfulness were seen to depreciate over time. The other factors which contributed to this finding will be explored in the following section.

4.4 Shifting Interpretations: From Meaningful to Status Quo

One central finding of this thesis is that meaningfulness and the quality of municipal-Indigenous relationships were strongly associated with one another. These relationships were understood to be primarily influenced by political will, and this political will was seen to be a direct result of the individuals who comprised City Council and Indigenous leadership positions. As a result, the institutionalization of these relationships through the TIA and TEDWG policy documents was seen to play a secondary role within the mediation of municipal-Indigenous relationships and the crystallization of mutual and coexisting identities. Despite the on-the-ground work that transpired during the initial phases of TIA and TEDWG which was reflective of the normative theorizations of co-production and coexistence, the continuity relationships was seen to impact current understandings of these planning initiatives as meaningful, or not.

Speaking to the Accord participants noted:

The Aboriginal Accord, we meet quarterly and everybody kind of reports on what they've kind of been doing to either support the TRC calls to action or what they've been doing in terms of supporting Aboriginal people. And so it becomes more of just a roundtable kind of thing, but no real action. And nothing that goes to City Council. There's a huge gap in basically City Council, there's no Aboriginal representation at all. And so Aboriginal issues just don't even make it to any of the meetings really. And the intent of the Accord I think was to fill that gap, but it hasn't been. (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

With the developing and the signing of the Aboriginal Accord the intent of that document was to have it be a living document ... not to be something that was signed and then forgotten about. We wanted to make sure that it was something that was kind of on-going and that there was on-going activities and commitments. And however the current leadership within city council isn't what we had from before. So it's a little disheartening. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

The Accord was understood to have transitioned from being known as a ground-breaking initiative which was developed and championed by Indigenous governance actors, which espoused a progressive set of declarations, and which fostered positive relationships within the

community, to being seen as an initiative that has neither been effectively bringing an Indigenous lens to municipal politics nor advancing any coordinated projects or programs.

Similarly, reflections on TEDWG revealed that there has been diminishing collaboration and implementation of the Action Plans. Many participants have also felt that the “implementation component [of TEDWG] has lacked somewhat” (Interview 2: City Manager) or that “for the most part it’s gathered dust” (Interview 7: MMF Thompson Region Vice-President).

Put by another respondent:

There was a strategy for implementation, it’s just Council never prioritized it. I mean, you’ve had various groups, major stakeholders participating who were all involved, all at the table, and no one implemented. It’s just kind of up in the air collecting dust. It’s a perfect example of a great strategy collecting dust. (Interview 13: Former City Planner)

Although interviews with Indigenous governance actors indicated that the City of Thompson was seen to have more earnestly attempted, through the development of TIA and TEDWG, to “creat[e] those relationships and mak[e] things more harmonious and more welcoming to First Nation citizens” (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor), participants also largely felt that both TIA and TEDWG failed to sustain the principles and relationships that they were created to operationalize. This meant that participants also found the meaningfulness of these initiatives to be waning, demonstrating how change over that time complicates interpretations of planning approaches as characteristic of co-production and coexistence. Overall, this thesis found that planning initiatives and relationships, once considered to be substantive and meaningful, could be rendered less meaningful over time without continual commitments to progress, as illustrated by the following passage:

... perhaps it’s a natural evolution to becoming more than we are right now. And I think it’s recognizing that. We need to be more than what we say we are. We need to be able to demonstrate that and show that, and show that in very real ways. Let’s have those hard

questions, whether it's a representative making a presentation about the things they're doing. And let's be honest about some questions here. How do we make this better? Because if everybody is doing a great job at what it is they're doing, we should be in fantastic shape in this community. But we're not. We've made a lot of progress, but there's so much more I believe we can be doing. (Participant 10: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Thus, meaningfulness, can be understood as a function of the quality and consistency of relationships and identifiable changes over time. This finding draws attention to the importance of 'sustained engagement', a central tenet of coexistence (Porter & Barry, 2016). The predominance of these perspectives raises the question of what influenced interpretations of TIA and TEDWG as being meaningful to being seen as regressing back to supporting status quo.

The 'different things' that would happen to challenge these advances included municipal political change, which impacted interpersonal relationships and resulted in a City Council less sympathetic to working alongside Indigenous interests, dominant settler-colonial rationalities and racism; as well as provincial and federal political changes, which impacted the funding and opportunities made available to the community. The ways in which these relational and structural aspects played out with respect to the sustainability and continued meaningfulness of these planning initiatives varied; however, in both cases the continuity and efficacy of each was understood to have been curtailed.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS: THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONAL PLANNING APPROACHES

In this chapter I present an analysis of the contributing factors which shaped the progression of these two planning approaches. Following the development of each of these initiatives throughout their respective policy cycles revealed that while the design of the planning mechanisms contributed to shaping these outcomes, the planning mechanism designs were only one of a number of contributing factors. This thesis finds that the quality of interpersonal engagement between municipal and Indigenous governance actors was a primary factor which contributed to the outcomes of each initiative. Other interrelated factors included political will, Indigenous agency, the continuity of relationships, and the ability of these actors to facilitate the convergence of their interests. Additionally, the external opportunities and limitations presented by industry, federal, and provincial actors were also seen to contribute to shaping the municipal-Indigenous interface.

Although the tangible outcomes of the TIA and TEDWG planning initiative were varied due to their distinctive design and purposes, generally feelings of meaningfulness towards these initiatives amongst governance actors were seen to follow similar trajectories over the course of their policy cycles. These findings illustrate how planning initiatives themselves can move from being seen as meaningful to being seen as more tokenistic given their underpinning relationships. These findings also extend to interpretations of the planning approaches' implementation measures, where meaningfulness was more strongly related to the quality of the relationships being discussed than their degrees of symbolism versus tangibility.

5.1 Meaningfulness and the Centrality of Political Will

The important role that political will played in establishing the positive beginning of TIA and TEDWG was a common theme which emerged through participant interviews. Correspondingly the role of political will in failing to sustain the momentum of these initiatives was also identified across interviews. Weaker political will following political changes and turnover affecting the council composition was predominantly associated with the waning relationships and commitments outlined above. While the former City Council also had council members who were not perceived to be supportive of the advancement of municipal-Indigenous relationships, the predominant presence of strongly committed individuals was seen to outweigh these perspective. Speaking to the political climate that existed during the establishment of the Accord one participant reflected,

So when we passed the Aboriginal Accord, I think it was June 21st, 2009 on National Aboriginal day, we held the meeting outside and I had two members of council that did not attend that meeting. They just wouldn't. And so I've often argued that I think that was intentional on their part and I think that they reflect the mining community mentality. And it was our new council [members] saying that we have to move beyond. So I don't know what business as usual is, I just know that I think the role of the municipality is to push and to lead. (Participant 8: Former Mayor)

However, it was commonly expressed that these mentalities again became more prominent in the following political cycle.

Particularly the City of Thompson council composition, and I feel based on what I experienced is that there's unfortunately undertones of racism that are very, shall I say, they're there. And as a result those who again identify as Indigenous are not at the table, they're not involved in the decision making process, they're not getting involved in the city building process and you see it as a result in Thompson to this day it's been there for decades. (Interview 13: Former City Planner)

These perspectives from both municipal government and Indigenous governance actors illustrate the general agreeance amongst participants regarding the centrality of political will in shaping the municipal-Indigenous interface.

A number of examples were provided to demonstrate how a supportive political climate was seen to have diminished, and how political choices diverged from the policy documents which were developed to inform City Hall's decision-making, administration and operations. One example which was discussed by multiple participants in regards to how current political will was seen to be unsupportive of Indigenous aspirations, was the series of choices which resulted in locating the TUAS Coordinator position within the Community Futures organization rather than within the City of Thompson.

When TUAS applied for the funding through the government to have a coordinator and an Aboriginal Liaison what they wanted was sort of a high level city employee to hold that position. So in other words the TUAS coordinator would have an office at City Hall and they would be mixing with the Mayor and with the City Planners. They would be up there, like an upper position, and the City instead kind of took a hands off approach. (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Given the UAS requirement for municipal governments to act as the contribution agreement holders and subsequent flow-through funding agencies, this position was envisioned by the TUAS committee as being positioned within city administration in order to better integrate the work of the TUAS with the City of Thompson. Beyond addressing the administrative capacity issues which were identified as a barrier to collaboration, this position was seen as one measure which could address the representation and cultural competency gaps at City Hall by integrating this individual within the organization and everyday municipal government processes. Thus, the 'hands-off approach' that was seen to be taken was understood as a missed opportunity by some Indigenous participants. Although one respondent was skeptical of the position being located

within the municipality, they then suggested that a similar position could be one method to address the gaps that exist between municipal decision-making and Indigenous political aspirations and self-government.

If I had a staff member working with the City of Thompson connecting us with them I think that would go a long ways. ... Like otherwise I'm just shooting in the dark saying this is how it could work better. But I think that's what is needed. I don't think it's up to me to place that person there. When I say that I mean cost share the position so I have an obligation and contribution, but the person is also well aware that they're working for both municipal government and the Metis government. I think that would go a long ways. (MMF Thompson Region Vice-President)

The creation of an Indigenous Office within City Hall and the hiring of Indigenous staff is one pathway towards decolonizing municipal government which has been put into practice and which has been examined within municipal-Indigenous planning literature (Fawcett, Walker & Greene, 2015). However, the above approaches differ in that these mechanisms envision positions within City Hall that serve both municipal government and Indigenous political bodies with the express purpose of bridging the two and recognizing the autonomy of both. Given that this Aboriginal Liaison position was not placed within City Hall, the efficacy of such an approach cannot be examined. It is worth noting though that such a position and approach towards governance might foreseeably be reflective of the political autonomy envisioned by coexistence, given that Indigenous staff, while important for decolonizing institutions, may not necessarily represent or be empowered to represent the interests of Indigenous communities, although they are reflective of their communities.

The composition of Indigenous participants and partners has been examined as one facet of co-production in urban environments where a number of governance actors coincide (Belanger & Walker, 2009). These scholars have demonstrated the importance of partnering with

appropriate Indigenous governance actors given the policy area and implicated rights holders. In the case of the TIA and TEDWG planning initiatives participants were largely satisfied with the composition of Indigenous governance actors despite the challenges presented in an urban context where multiple organizations hold various measures of representative legitimacy with respect to advocating on behalf of urban-based Indigenous communities. However, one observation which was made was that the Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre was neither an Accord signatory nor a TEDWG stakeholder despite being overwhelmingly identified as a key Indigenous organization and actor within the community. Although the Friendship Centre participates as a partner at the Accord table, the exclusion of this non-political organization is reflective of the representation gap experienced by many urban-based Indigenous peoples when Indigenous peoples' right to self-government and self-determination is approached through a nation-to-nation framework and when these governing political bodies are not empowered to provide services to their urban-based community members. This challenge is exacerbated in a number of ways. First, for First Nation communities the demands and "legislated poverty" (Indigenous Governance Actor) on-reserve mean that urban-based community members are often de-prioritized.

What we do here in Thompson is not so we can reinvest back into the City of Thompson. What we do is address the social issues with the revenue and the profits that we generate. Like over the last 12 years we've built an extra 220 homes to address the housing shortage in our community. And even though we've built an extra 220, we haven't been able to catch up. We still have the overcrowding and a shortage. ... And that's why I say federal and provincial bureaucracy doesn't work for us, it works against us. (Interview 1: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Second, the structural issues presented by Canadian politics has meant that urban-based Indigenous "people get lost through the cracks." (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor) and are often not well connected to supports and services.

Well even when you look at Jordan's Principle for instance. ... And because of these policies that they implement, we get caught in the middle of these. We're the ones that get caught in the middle, even at the municipal level. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

The whole jurisdictional issue is scar across every community. Who is responsible? What resources? How do you flow resources to Indigenous people? ... Those resources probably aren't going to follow you. And I think that goes to a fundamental issue as Canadians that possibly inadvertently restricting peoples opportunity, certainly with respect to pursuing opportunities. (Interview 11: Municipal Government Actor)

Additionally, funding requirements are often seen as contributing to these divisions and gaps in the provision of services and programming in the urban environment.

And then there's also government funding that I think prevents that from happening. It interferes with that because if you take as an example our Métis Employment and Training program, so we run a number of employment projects. So I think in that program, and it comes from Service Canada, once I've filled my Métis target and I've advertised, and I say I can employ ten people and I get six Métis, should I leave the other four vacant? Well why can't I offer it to other Indigenous populations? And if I can't do it there, why can't I offer it to others? It just annoys me and it creates division, as opposed to working together. We need to work together. And yes we have our unique needs and we have our rights, but I think we still need to work together. (Interview 7: MMF Thompson Region Vice-President)

Given these systemic barriers and the displacement of Indigenous peoples' governance mechanisms, the Friendship Center's lack of inclusion from the higher level stages of these planning initiatives alongside their express identification as important actors within the community may not appropriately account for their current role in representing the voices of many urban-based Indigenous peoples.

These findings also point to the importance of distinguishing between the roles of politicians and administration at these same tables, something which may be associated with the City of Thompson's size. While city administration with planning roles were understood to contribute to these planning relationships, their role was understood as less central to the

outcomes than Mayor and Council. Within City Hall, the limited role of administration was acknowledged given the hierarchical transmission of political objectives and the mobilization of organizational resources that stem from these policy directives. From the perspective of the municipal government these hierarchies and their implications for relationship-building were interpreted as follows:

Council is the policy setter and administration is the executor of that policy. So basically council is to be at the 30,000 foot level as often as possible. And administration is at the 10,000 foot level, and then staff is on the ground and working. And so it's tough to stay at that higher level. But that's the job of council, is to provide direction, to provide policy, administration to implement, and staff to follow through with those directions. ... There's a responsibility for everybody. (Interview 4: City Mayor)

As a result, the agency of administration within the City of Thompson was seen to be limited.

... and you can't really get anywhere when you try to push as a bureaucrat ... You get council who just kind of overlooks it, and they want to pave the roads, and build their sidewalks, and make right-of-ways that are smooth for truckers to drive down. So it's unfortunate, that's where I see it going. Unless you have a change with the decision makers at the governance level, at the council table, you won't see change. (Interview 13: Former City Planner)

Academic literature has not focused on the distinctive roles of planners and administrative staff, as opposed to political officials in municipal-Indigenous planning. These findings complicate understandings municipal government as a homogenous entity by illustrating the varied roles that each of these groups of actors play, and how the rationales of politicians and administration are not always aligned with one another. Within the context of the City of Thompson, administration and staff were seen to play a limited role when faced with a lack of supportive political will.

One example where staff were seen to have limited agency to enact the principles of the Accord or to follow through on the policies within the TEDWG planning documents was in regards to the discussion of adding Cree signage throughout the city. This idea was advanced by

an Indigenous community leader who participated in TEDWG, as a symbolic and practical gesture given Thompson's nested location within Indigenous geographies, and the demographic of people for whom Cree is a first language within the community (Antoszewski, 2016). This same media article outlined the city planner's support for this initiative given its alignment with the Accord and TEDWG's Rebranding Action Plan, as well as the relatively low costs of implementation through a signage replacement strategy. However, despite the support of administration and the relative ease of implementation this initiative was perceived to have been impeded as a result of political will despite its confluence with a number of strategic policy documents including the Sustainable Community Plan which states, "Action 4.6.1.3: The City should continue to incorporate the aboriginal identity within the region into the built environment" (City of Thompson, 2010, 11-28). This finding points to a possible necessity for municipal-Indigenous planning literature to discuss urban governance from perspective that more clearly distinguishes politicians from other actors such as planning practitioners in order to provide better recommendations for practice. Additionally, there is a lack of urban planning literature that speaks to these informal processes of 'pushing up' as an administration or staff member, something which is often tacitly understood within the urban planning field.

5.2 Interpersonal Relationships, Cultural Competency, and Indigenous Agency

In addition to identifying collective political will as one important contributor to the quality of municipal-Indigenous relationships in the community, participant interviews also demonstrated the significant role that interpersonal relationships between settler and Indigenous individuals played in effecting change, driving planning initiatives, and facilitating collaborative governance arrangements. When asked how better municipal-Indigenous relationships could be

facilitated both groups of participants spoke to the importance of building these interpersonal relationships.

I try to build relationships with people, that's number one. I think people value that. I think Indigenous people value that more than anyone else. ... I just think at the end of the day it's really all about dealing with people and treating people with respect even if you disagree. (Interview 11: Municipal Government Actor)

For example, over the years I've got to know a local elder ... and he does a lot of our opening prayers and things like that. And former Councilor Charlene Lafreniere who is First Nation introduced me to more of the cultural beliefs. And so one of the things that we did last year, we have an organizational meeting every fall where we organize the committees of council, and so last year we invited another elder into our council chambers to give us a blessing prior to the meeting. ... So that's taking it a step further. And for me that rings in my mind that we have to do more of that, incorporate the cultural beliefs of both entities into one, so we understand the other's culture. (Interview 4: City Mayor)

Indigenous respondents also spoke to these same sets of skills and the importance of interpersonal relationships for building better organizational relationships and more meaningful initiatives.

Having mentors, people that you can reach out to and bounce things off of, because we're not all going to know everything we need to know. That's where I come from. And I think [Mayor Johnston] was able to get that particularly with [Councilor Lafreniere] when she was on council. And he was actually quite upfront about it, if he needed to know about something or he just needed to know, he'd ask. (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Another participant commented on how these interpersonal interactions would often lead to government actors being more willing and able to bring some matters over to city council, thereby further strengthening relationships and changing municipal political discourse by "taking initiative on their own to seek out these programs and this information to try and understand.

And it helps a lot with developing partnerships.” (Interview 3: Executive Director, Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation)

Given the role that these relationships played in driving municipal-Indigenous planning initiatives, another municipal governance actor commented on how the Accord and TEDWG were at a continual risk of becoming obsolete given that the interpersonal relationships underpinning were continually at risk of not being sustained:

The depth, and the strength, and the ability to carry out things comes from that relationship. And so I think that it’s easy enough to phone up and say we’re going to have a meeting, but if it’s only once every six months or once every two years when there’s an issue then I’m not sure that’s real. And I think if you want success, sustainable and ongoing, then the relationship has to be real. And it’s got to be about trust. It’s got to be about you’re going to make the phone call good times and bad. There has to be consistency in your approach. (Interview 8: Former Mayor)

Much like political and staffing turnover impacted political will, these dynamics were seen to impact interpersonal relationships. As a result, the meaningfulness and continuity of the Accord and TEDWG was associated with the capacity of individuals to continue these relationships. This continuity was connected to the interpersonal exchanges and dialogue that took place as a result of individual actors seeking out conversations themselves or as a result of participating in planning processes. Speaking to the meaningfulness and value of the TEDWG process participants commented,

Even after that process [TEDWG], one good thing that came out of it was the partners. We had a project and we included those partners in that project. ... So we included some of those people and they came. And what we were telling them about our realities, they were shocked and surprised. And here they lived here all these years, but they’ve never known anything about Aboriginal people or what our communities are like in reality. Things that they have and that they don’t have, these were all a big surprise to them. No clue about what life is really like for people in our communities. So it was a learning experience and it educated them. (Interview 6, Participant 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

And as for the people in it, the individuals in it, the Mayor, the past Mayor, they were just very comfortable to talk to them. They were coming in with their Mayor hat and only their Mayor hat. They did try to create a sense of community. (Interview 7: MMF Thompson Region Vice-President)

A number of similar narratives emerged in which settler governance actors were seen to have had formative learning experiences as a result of collaboration, leading to more mutual recognition. Interestingly, two participants' comments mirrored one another in providing an example of how this dialogue could lead to better understanding and could subsequently motivate more meaningful collaboration. Reflecting back one municipal government actor commented, "And I'll never forget one time [de-identified] told me ... 'You have to understand that our people are last in line for the worst housing. And [they were] dead right.'" (Interview 8: Former Mayor) Mirroring this, that same individual commented, "And I suppose [Mayor Johnston] will never forget when I told him, 'We're the poorest of the poor. We're the last in line for the worst housing in this community.'" (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor). These comments taken together are reflective of the finding that interpersonal relationships are an integral part of collaborative governance arrangements and these relationships were perceived to be connected to political will more broadly, as well as TIA and TEDWG's meaningfulness and efficacy more directly. Meaningfulness derived from municipal-Indigenous relationships were not only described by what happened as a result of these formal planning meetings, but also by what happened between these meetings and between individual actors.

Beyond exhibiting a willingness to engage and build relationships, cultural competency was seen as a key skill for municipal government actors in order to facilitate more positive interpersonal relationships. For a number of participants, relational and respectful approaches to dialogue and communication was one key avenue for working towards developing deeper

understandings of oneself and others. Speaking to these practices, having a willingness to learn and ask questions was commonly identified as an important attribute, as well as owning ones misunderstandings, mistakes, and un-comfortability:

I think the ability to listen and the ability to listen respectfully. The ability to laugh at things, not in a challenging way, coming from a good place. Having mentors, people that you can reach out to and bounce things off of. Because we're not all going to know everything we need to know. ... And not being afraid to sound stupid either. We've had to deal with it. You could really get to test that no question is a stupid question, that's really where you get to practice it. (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor)

I think you need to be committed to understanding. I think in my time there have been many times I've had to stand or sit and feel really awkward. I mean that's just the reality. There's some things that have taken place that will make you feel very awkward. And I think that you have to get over the initial push to respond ... we have to learn perspective and what might be thought as okay. Whether they're words or actions, I think we have to learn to understand the context of how other people see them. (Interview 8: Former Mayor)

These practices relate to the literature on coexistence which outlines a praxis that appreciates the 'commotion of co-motion' wherein conflict and tension is understood as an inherent part of cooperation (Porter & Barry, 2016). A few Indigenous participants also reflected on the importance of self-reflexivity as a critical component of this cultural competency required to create better relationships:

And really getting you to look at yourself because you can't change anybody else, you can only change yourself. So that's where it kind of starts really looking inside of your own privilege, your own biases, your own journey, and then once you do that then maybe you can kind of look at other peoples' journey. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

This thematic finding builds on the coexistence literature which advances a praxis that entails 'sustained engagement' (Porter & Barry, 2016) by specifically demonstrating the role of sustained interpersonal engagement in driving and supporting these policy mechanisms and their

underlying principles, as well as the complexity of sustaining engagement and relationships within a dynamic political environment.

In addition to changing the practices of settler individuals within municipal government and other urban governance organizations, Indigenous agency and representation within urban governance political bodies was identified as a key component of TIA and TEDWG's success and the relationship building within the community. Indigenous leaders within the community were identified as being at the forefront of these shifts, working towards the advancement of their political aspirations for coexisting within the community of Thompson. Generally within the community of Thompson, Indigenous leaders were seen as having prominent voices within the community. Stated by one participant, "[t]here's a lot of really strong Aboriginal leaders within this community, especially the women. Those are the ones I've been exposed to in our committees." (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor) While a number of these leaders contributed to the success of the TIA and TEDWG initiatives, the contributions of one individual was especially prominent across interviews.

This individual occupied multiple roles within the community including being the TUAS Chair, the Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation Executive Director, and a City of Thompson Councilor. Given their multiple roles within the community, and their strong working relationships with various governance actors it was stated that as an Indigenous Council member she was a driving force in terms of both the TIA and TEDWG initiatives. Iterated by one participant:

I think with the change in leadership maybe 10 years ago there was very little representation for the Indigenous community in Thompson. It was lacking that support and voice at the council meetings. It was a big change. I guess the previous Director here

got involved with City Council and started bringing those voices forward. (Interview 3: Executive Director, Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation)

Participants spoke to how this individual was able to effectively bridge the responsibilities of being an Indigenous community leader and municipal official, an example which highlights the propensity for Indigenous agency within settler governance systems and the permeability that exists between the spheres of municipal government and urban-based Indigenous governance.

Commenting on the intentional approach that this individual took with respect to balancing these identities, one municipal government actor reflected on the following:

I remember the very first meeting. [Councilor Lafreniere] was very clear that she had won as an Indigenous female, which was another huge issue in municipal politics for many years. And she wanted to celebrate that so we brought in a drum for that first inaugural meeting. And you wouldn't believe the opposition ... And so she always, at every meeting, had her feather that had been presented to her. And she always had it and some of the tough debates she would hold it. And again many in Thompson were very upset with that. And so I've always said despite the things that we've done, racism in Thompson is systemic. ... So to evolve or move beyond that is extremely difficult, right? And it's baby steps. (Interview 8: Former Mayor)

Within the urban context, I contend that this permeability complicates theorizations of the contact zone and municipal-Indigenous interface wherein municipal government actors and Indigenous governance actors have been largely discussed as discrete categories (Porter & Barry, 2016; Fawcett, Walker, & Greene, 2015). In the case of Thompson, Indigenous agency both outside of and within settler governance systems was able to substantively influence the municipal-Indigenous interface and Indigenous leaders were able to draw on their identity as resources while participating within mainstream urban governance processes. Furthermore, settler governance actors with cultural competency were seen to play a supportive role in facilitating productive planning relationships.

In the following political cycles there has been no Indigenous representation on City Council. In contrast the Council composition at the time of the interviews was perceived as having a stronger presence of individuals who were motivated by underlying racist attitudes. These perceptions, which were implicated in discussions regarding diminishing relationships and the non-linear progression of the Accord and TEDWG, were commonly spoken to by Indigenous respondents, as well as some municipal government actors.

However, if it was presented at this council there's no way they would've agreed to it [NCN's urban reserve designation]. ... they like to have their in-camera meetings before the actual meeting so they can kind of get all their bias and racist comments out before the actual meeting where it's filmed. And I know this because I have members who are actually in those meetings, in those pre-committee meetings. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

There are two or three that are kind of redneck as we call them. But the majority are at least making an effort to approach us. The Mayor, they take a beating on him in council, but they've been trying to have positive relationships with the Aboriginal community. (Interview 6, Participant 2: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Beyond impacting municipal political will, this political official turnover was also understood to have impacted interpersonal relationships, wherein some individuals were no longer involved with urban governance processes and new political officials were not necessarily seen to effectively continue those relationships. The general policy-direction of the City of Thompson and its political leadership was understood to be less amenable in regards to working towards maintaining the relationships and commitments outlined by the TIA and TEDWG documents.

Across a number of interviews it was broadly agreed upon that Indigenous representation within City Hall at both the political and administrative levels was desirable. Speaking to the term Indigenization, and thinking about the framing of this process as a project that municipalities might endeavor to undertake, one Indigenous participant commented on the

contradictory nature of such an undertaking without empowered Indigenous partners when they posed the rhetorical question, “How can they, when they don’t know what it means?” (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor). This comment speaks to the political ontological differences that exist between settler and Indigenous worldviews, and is reflective of Tomiak’s statement that “[t]he various struggles to decolonize the city involve not only re-asserting physical, political, and symbolic space, but are also about fundamentally re-thinking how the city is conceptualized and by whom.” (Tomiak, 2016, 16) However, responses regarding both representative legitimacy and how this representation ought to be achieved differed across participants. In response to questions such as what the political implications for the City of Thompson might be given the Indigenous population and growth projections, a majority of participants spoke to three interrelated but distinct representation pathways: Indigenous political representation on City Council; representation within municipal administration and staff; and representation through engagement with Indigenous communities, organizations, and political bodies.

While the above discussion regarding the centrality of political will and Indigenous agency highlights the role that Indigenous political representation at City Hall was understood to play, a few non-Indigenous participants directly spoke to the lack of representation within the City of Thompson.

I mean who knows maybe the community should be setting aside saying listen on every one of our committees we’re going to have an Aboriginal person. And it’s unfortunate that our council doesn’t have a strong representation of Aboriginal people. You know all kinds of different small and large things could come from that. (Interview 11: Municipal Government Actor)

But this council has no First Nation or Metis identified people. And that’s where I think we need more input at the political level to ensure that their beliefs and customs and needs are at the table, as opposed to after the fact. (Interview 4: City Mayor)

Indigenous representation within the City of Thompson's administration and staff was also identified as a strategy for furthering more mutual planning relationships.

They need to do some internal grooming, seeing who they have employed, looking at their hiring policy, doing things differently to try and attract people that are of Aboriginal descent to feel welcome maybe pursuing them. You know looking at their hiring practices for sure ... coming up with a hiring track to have somebody at the management level. And they're smaller so I get that it's difficult to do that, but if you're not going to have anybody that understands that First Nations perspective then you're going to have a hard time moving forward. ... And making a concerted effort to help them in their promotion and not just placing them there, but making sure that they've earned it, but supporting them. And so there's a lot of work to be done. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

These municipal systems and procedures were seen to be slowly evolving alongside the higher level policies of TIA, given the City of Thompson HR Manager's interest in a best practices strategy and workbook for a more representative Indigenous workforce developed within the community by Accord partners and the TUAS.

But overall she said the timing is really good because this is something that the City needs, looking at best practices for hiring retention. And not just that, with employees. But just with how the City deals with Aboriginal people. There's so much racism and so the experience of even say an Aboriginal person coming in to pay a bill, especially if they are late with a payment. You know I think there is just that attitude that is very pervasive. (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

While both political and administrative representation were desirable, some Indigenous participants also identified challenges of participating within urban governance processes due to the demands that are placed upon Indigenous people in terms of representing a diverse complex of cultural groups and political bodies.

The expectation placed on Aboriginal people when you become involved in those circles is extremely high. I don't know if you've heard it before, but the expectation that you're going to know everything there is to know about Aboriginal people, that's the first thing you're saddled with. And you're not going to know everything. So it's like you become the go-to person. And it's a really unfair position to place people in. ... And even with

our various tables within the community you'll see a lot of the same people. And they all have jobs, you know? So to do that community service piece is also very demanding on time and everything else. (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Speaking to the challenge faced by Indigenous actors, this comment is also reflective of the need for representation strategies to be accompanied by support structures and cultural competency training given the expectations for these individuals to navigate the multiple urban-based Indigenous political bodies with varying degrees of representative legitimacy within Thompson, and to bring multi-faceted Indigenous perspectives to a wide variety of projects and planning processes.

Engagement with the broader Indigenous communities within Thompson was also seen as a potential pathway for enhancing representation by a few participants. Through contrasting the engagement that primarily occurred with governance actors through the TIA and TEDWG mechanisms, one participant identified this lack of broader representation within planning processes.

Yeah, it's just basically been organization representatives. And of course, they'll say that they have because they have their community forums and this and that. However ... even the places they choose to have them or the times they choose to have them at, those all impact things. ... So when you even do something as simple as holding a community forum at a school. They don't realize that a lot of Aboriginal people don't feel welcome in schools. They don't feel it's safe. They don't feel it's somewhere they want to go. And even just the way they're done. ... The way that they do things or handle things or present things and that kind of stuff. So yeah they do because they have their community forums. But do I think it's done in a way that encourages Aboriginal people to attend or actually feel like they have a voice? (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

These statements reflect the gap that still exists within Thompson between Indigenous governance actors and urban-based Indigenous peoples more broadly with respect to articulating their aspirations and participating within urban governance processes. This criticism existed for the TEDWG process regarding the lack of capacity and support of Indigenous governance actors

to engage their respective constituencies, but also existed with respect to the design of mainstream public consultations without attentiveness to both the systemic barriers that prevent participation or the differences that exist with respect to conducting governance.

Well what I noticed it's a cultural thing too. Aboriginal peoples have their own culture, ways of doing things. And it's different from non-Aboriginal people. There's a time to even ask questions or have any meaningful discussion. So that has to change, we have to rethink processes. We need to be more open to the way Aboriginal people- and their culture too. There are cultural differences. (Interview 6, Participant 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Speaking to the role that these cultural variations play one participant reflected,

And in her westernized culture you value- it kind of values the values more than it does people. You know what I mean? Like simple things like not wanting to speak of this because it might be wrong, or this and that. Whereas, our values it's more about the person first. And it's just different, it has different takes. ... And because we have those differences, I think that person [the TUAS Aboriginal Liaison position] at the City would've really helped because policies are based on differences, are based on values ... And then they're all based on westernized values. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Despite a fairly broad recognition by municipal government participants regarding the importance of cultural competency, public engagement practices to date were not perceived to have adapted accordingly. To some, Indigenous representation on City Council and within administrative positions was expressly identified as inadequate without larger engagement with governance actors and community members. However, each of these strategies were understood as interrelated pathways which could help to address the political implications of settler-Indigenous coexistence within the northern city of Thompson.

Strategies that sought representation and cultural equity were seen to create opportunities for more relational governance approaches, and were understood to be one pathway towards urban coexistence. Another set of strategies which was spoken to was the redistribution of power

to support existing Indigenous leadership within the community. The majority of Indigenous participants spoke to each of these pathways, reflecting the interrelated role that representation and relational self-determination can play within urban centres:

But to me you have a representative population here and you're not represented by it at City Hall, and that's a big problem. ... Well for me self-determination leads to autonomy, to be able to be self-supporting. ... to be an active participant in the community. I think most of it comes from within our own, but I think as a community we need to work more together. And that recognition. ... We could play such an important role, but it doesn't happen because we don't get the respect. (Interview 7: MMF Thompson Region Vice-President)

These discussions of political representation were revealing of the challenge of putting mutual respect into practice, given the cultural and political decoupling that is characteristic of settler-colonialism and the dominant perception that western liberal democratic values and systems are culturally neutral (Coulthard, 2014). When municipal government actors considered the implications for municipal government given the significant and growing urban-based Indigenous population the responses included:

I think anyone who is elected to council is elected to represent the community as a whole. ... I think you have to play a leadership role but you have to create support and opportunities that enable people. ... But I would hope that we're not necessarily saying we're going to have a council of 47% Indigenous people. I say we're going to have a council of the strongest people we can possibly have, of which I would hope that would reflect the general population of the community. So how do you make that happen? (Interview 8: Former Mayor)

I think that to-date the strong Indigenous constituency, I guess for lack of a word, has been active in a few areas and certainly has been ignored at politicians' peril. I don't think it's really awakened yet, but I think that the potential certainly is there. ... The challenge I think I have with the question is the word political implications, meaning that there is a pressure point created that drives decisions, right? You know, to drive actions based on political metrics or political requirements, political imperatives. And I don't agree with that. (Interview 11: Municipal Government Actor)

Municipal government actors saw the urban-based Indigenous population as increasingly powerful within the community; however, their responses indicated that there is a hesitancy to address the issues of representation on City Council through any formal mechanism or the adaptation of existing municipal government processes. Conversely some responses from Indigenous governance actors illustrated a different take:

We have to rethink processes. ... I'm sure these processes should be changed, they shouldn't be frozen in time or static. ... Because they go so far back, they need to evolve and change and adapt. So that's what I think City Hall should think about too. Why not just pick people, why should they have to run? (Interview 6, Participant 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

I don't think that's what democracy stands for. I think in some ways democracy is having equal representation, for having equality. Is it really democracy or equality that you need to look at? ... I don't want it to be just representation, but I think you have to have the political voice that represents people. (Interview 7: MMF Thompson Region Vice-President)

These perspectives reflect the scholarly discussions regarding the differences and utility of numeric or descriptive representation versus substantive representation that are occurring in New Zealand where local governments are empowered through legislation to provide opportunities for Māori participation in decision-making processes through “a proportional electoral system and/or providing dedicated Māori wards or constituencies” (Sullivan, 2011; Gagne, 2016). While this research does not explore the merits of applying a similar approach to Canadian cities, it does highlight both the differences between municipal and Indigenous perspectives in the community of Thompson regarding representation. As well, it may highlight the possible disconnect that exists between statements from municipal government actors regarding the importance of understanding the role of culture within governance processes and individual “willingness to sort of look outside your strict boundaries of what you're guided by” (Interview 2: City Manager), and a lack of consideration of traditional liberal democratic

approaches as culturally imbued or mutable. However, these discussions regarding the role for urban-based political autonomy were also seen to be complicated by the understandably prevalent nation-to-nation relationship model being advanced within the community.

In conclusion, the findings presented within this section have demonstrated that the quality of municipal-Indigenous relationships in the community of Thompson have been key to effecting change and driving planning initiatives. Furthermore, Indigenous agency was understood to be central to the development of these relationships and the resulting collaborative governance mechanisms. A number of gaps with respect to Indigenous representation within municipal government were identified. In particular, cultural competency was seen as a critical skillset for municipal government actors to develop in order to develop better relationships and to better support planning initiatives. However, both Indigenous representation and cultural competency may present limitations with respect to unsettling western constructions of governance. Regardless of the lack of consensus surrounding these pathways to a more mutual coexistence, and the role of municipal government within that, shared aspirations between participants for higher degrees of Indigenous representation within City Hall and urban governance decision-making presents one area of interest convergence.

5.3 Interest Convergence and the Limitations of Economic Rationales for Engagement

Interest convergence has been theorized by Belanger and Walker (2009) as a primary rationale of governance actors for engaging in municipal-Indigenous planning initiatives. Across interviews the discourse of mutual benefit, as a rationale for engagement, was espoused by participants. In congruence with this theory, these participants illustrated that establishing

interest convergence was a tool for advancing planning relationships. The following findings reveal the benefits and challenges of converging governance actor interests. A number of Indigenous participants spoke to the continued importance of having settler governance actors and the general public better understand the positive economic role that Indigenous people play within the community and region.

And that's one of the things that people don't realize, that a lot of the services that they have- and that's some of the Council members included- that they don't realize how much they benefit from having Aboriginal people living here ... They don't want to look at the positive of, yes our people have issues and we have to do more for them, however, your town may not even be alive if it wasn't for our people coming and spending their money. ... So we have a definite impact on the economy itself. We have an impact on the population itself, on services that the city offers and uses. ... And that's the part that I think is not being looked at, or considered, or even appreciated. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Just in regards to the urban Indigenous community in Thompson. ... Thompson is supposed to be the hub of the north ... it's mainly made up of all the First Nations in the north, all the communities. They come here, they use the services, they use the hotels, they use restaurants. So they provide the businesses for Thompson. Although Vale is the main employer for Thompson, I think even if they do shut down Thompson will still be here because of the hub of services here. ... So all the services are here in Thompson, but I think the main customer is the First Nations and communities in the north ... it's the people in the surrounding communities that are keeping Thompson alive. (Interview 6, Participant 2: Indigenous Governance Actor)

This perspective was also seen to be a motivating rationale of the municipal governance actors interviewed.

The City of Thompson is on [NCN] lands, and the City of Thompson's economy would not be thriving the way, well it's not really thriving, but it would not be as continuous as it is because a lot of these people are really sustaining it. It's the hub of the north. The services are sustained primarily through Indigenous peoples coming to service their cars, to purchase those goods. (Interview 13: Former City Planner)

Both sets of actors spoke to this economic interdependency as a way of rationalizing the necessity of collaborative governance arrangements. These comments employed a similar set of

ideas and paralleled the language of mutual benefit that was used within the TIA and TEDWG documents. This shift in city politics towards framing Indigenous peoples as important to the community's sustainability and wellbeing was evident within the Accord document. The Accord document explicitly identified opportunities for the development of agreements that would lead to "[i]ncreasing Aboriginal participation within the community" and "[e]ncouraging Aboriginal investment in Thompson in areas including ... people, culture, business and community and social participation", among other policy areas (Thompson Indigenous Accord, para 9). Given TEDWG's economic diversification purpose, interest convergence around economic sustainability was further developed between governance actors and within the documents themselves. Within these documents a significant focus was placed upon the economic benefits of collaborative governance arrangements and the important role that Indigenous peoples play in stimulating the local and regional economy. Participants from both groups often implied or spoke explicitly about how the economic benefits resulting from these partnerships are also tied to social, cultural, and political benefits for both settler and Indigenous peoples. However, the predominant common ground expressed by these two sets of actors was economic rationalization.

Generally speaking, municipal and Indigenous perspectives regarding the opportunities for advancing their mutual goals varied. Achieving mutually beneficial relationships in practice, and within the context of unequal power relations, was seen to be a key limitation of interest convergence. It was noted by some Indigenous participants that these economic benefits were often constructed as mutual, but that in practice more emphasis tended to be placed on the municipality's sustainability rather than the Indigenous communities' benefit.

But it [Thompson 2020] was more about how the City of Thompson would survive, by them providing all products and services, not the First Nations. We want you to be our customers, we want to be your provider. That's what they're talking about. (Interview 1: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Another viewpoint which was suggestive of this gap between a discourse of mutualism and mutualism in practice, was the critique that municipal officials have not sought out “trying to get in on [Indigenous] agenda's” (Interview 6, Participant 2: Indigenous Governance Actor). One participant also spoke to the linkages that existed between their organization's economic development plans and the planning that has been undertaken by the City of Thompson, noting that there could be better harmonization “if they would talk to us- if they would include us” in ongoing discussions of economic sustainability (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor). This finding suggests that despite broad interest convergence regarding increasing economic partnerships, other factors have contributed to the gap between these stated goals and municipal-Indigenous relations in practice.

Indigenous participants also identified that there is an onus for municipalities to engage with the existing work which is being undertaken by these governance actors in the region and community. These comments acknowledge that there is still an unequal level of power for municipalities to decide when to engage in collaborative governance arrangements. Similarly, a number of Indigenous governance actors did not perceive that there was an effective forum or mechanism which could effectively address this imbalance, despite the existing TIA and TEDWG mechanisms:

Vale, or INCO before it, took care of the water supply in Thompson. And then Vale continued to do that. And then all of the sudden there was a discussion between the City and Vale about doing away with that arrangement. The City would have to start billing people for the water and that's where we're at now. I don't think Aboriginal organizations or populations were invited to go and participate in those discussions. It's

just something that happened. Those kinds of big decisions, there's no formal process for Aboriginal organizations to be invited. (Interview 6, Participant 1: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Yeah, we're not too happy with the make-up of those committees. We've kind of shared that at the Accord table as well that it needs to be broader. ... We'll see whether it kind of seeps through. I think they felt that there were a lot of accusations. However, when there's nothing but older white settlers that are men on the panel, then you know. (Participant 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

The complexity of negotiating the parameters of mutually beneficially relationships was also made evident by the following juxtaposed comments regarding the development of a pre-manufactured housing industry.

I mean there's obviously the potential to manufacture homes which will benefit our community, but it will also benefit some of the surrounding communities who have housing shortages. So I think we're always sort of looking outside those boundaries as opposed to strictly saying what can be done for the City of Thompson, we're always sort of looking with a broader lens which includes the region. (Interview 2: City Manager)

This statement expresses an ethic of mutual benefit, whereby a new manufacturing industry would be established in the community and would provide what is perceived to be a needed service to neighbouring communities. However, a contrasting perspective was offered regarding a potential imbalance in who would benefit from this project.

Like one of the things that they're looking at is talking about the pre-manufacturing for housing units here in the City of Thompson ... What's the benefit to First Nations people? ... We know pre-manufactured homes are not the best quality ... And I tell First Nations, 'why would you want to purchase a pre-manufactured home and take away the employment from your local economy?' I said, 'because you're buying this you have these plumbers, these electricians, these carpenters out of work.' (Interview 1: Indigenous Governance Actor)

These statements demonstrate the complexity of finding common ground beyond broadly stated values such as mutual benefit, and point towards the importance of continual engagement and negotiation towards the development of these joint goals.

Although unequal power relations continue to shape these relationships and the distribution of their benefits, the increasing prominence of Indigenous governance actors and their undertaking of Indigenous-led projects and programs within the community has tangibly impacted how municipal government actors have come to relate to Indigenous peoples. Some participants attributed this increasing prominence and agency within the community as having begun to shift how interest convergence is being framed. One example where this increasing Indigenous agency was understood to have led to a re-framing of settler perspectives is with respect to the significant role that Keewatin Tribal Council's Keewatin Housing Association now plays within the policy field of housing. Commenting on KTC's role as a housing provider and property manager one participant stated:

I think [TEDWG] talked about the idea of a Thompson Housing Agency. That one is a little bit of a tougher sell, to think that we can start with an agency from scratch and move it into the public housing business. I think that a lot of the experience in working with third parties and community resources is that critical mass actually matters. And we see our biggest partner in Thompson as actually having public housing would be Keewatin. They own and operate a portfolio of their own that's significant. It's over 70 units. And then they operate, and hopefully eventually will own, the other 52 units that [Manitoba Housing] built in partnership with them. So who would you rather work with? I mean for a number of reasons I'd rather work with the Indigenous group that identifies closest with the majority of clients and the group that has already the most units under management. (Interview 11: Municipal Government Actor)

Similar sentiments were shared with respect to First Nations and the growing economic opportunities in the community and region. First Nations were understood to have increasing agency with respect to undertaking economic development "with or without being invited to the table" (Interview 8: Former Mayor). These viewpoints seem to be indicative of a shift in the power dynamics of the community, although the extent to which these changing perceptions have impacted interest convergence was not explored. Understanding how interest convergence is being negotiated is important because despite the evolving interpretations of municipal

responsibilities with respect to upholding nation-to-nation relationships, in the case of Thompson, interest convergence is the primary pathway for policy co-production and the development of more equitable relationships.

These findings also reveal the role of provincial and federal policies in mediating these relationships and interest convergence. The policy and programmatic decisions at both the federal and provincial levels of government were seen by participants to have had a direct impact on the continued efficacy and meaningfulness of initiatives such as TIA and TEDWG and the mediation of interest convergence. Municipal government and Indigenous governance actors identified that federal and provincial government decision-making played an important role in constraining or promoting local relationships and initiatives, particularly through setting policy priorities and the provision of funding. Interviewees noted how changes to the UAS federal funding agreements impacted the momentum of the Accord table. These individuals described how the TUAS had formerly been a committee which would distribute funds to organizations or groups within the community to undertake various projects, but that changes to the UAS program meant that the TUAS could no longer fund these undertakings and instead had to focus on strategic planning. Given that, “it was the Urban Aboriginal Strategy that really sought funding to help Indigenize the city to really get that going, to celebrate the cultures that Thompson resides in” (Interview 13: Former City Planner), this shift was associated with a loss of the committee’s footing within the community and was perceived to have had direct implications for the Accord efficacy and relationships. However, at the time of the interviews the redevelopment of the UAS program to the Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples was identified as a possible opportunity for regaining this footing and to revitalizing the Accord table. Describing this one participant stated, “The TUAS is going to do a presentation at the TAA

[Thompson Aboriginal Accord] meeting in September and I think they're going to get their steam back.” (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor) While political will at the municipal level was the most commonly identified contributor to the quality of relationships, political will within senior levels of settler government was also understood to play an important role in enabling the development of these relationships and the implementation of local plans and policies.

Whereas the federal government primarily influenced the TUAS, and subsequently TIA, shifting provincial politics were seen to play a greater role in influencing the progression of TEDWG. Many of the projects which were implemented as a result of the TEDWG Action Plans utilized provincial funding and support. Provincial political leadership changes were seen by participants to negatively influence the trajectory of discussions regarding the implementation of the Restorative Justice Facility Action Plan. This Action Plan was a response to the legislative changes proposed by the Federal Government's Bill C-10, which were projected to lead to higher rates of incarceration, as well as the Province of Manitoba's previous interest in investing in a new facility to replace the existing Dauphin correctional facility. As a result the implementation of this plan was largely outside of the purview of municipal government, although governance actors continue to advocate for the facility:

... it looked like we were going to make a lot of headway before the election, provincial election, because we were having talks with the Minister and those kinds of things. As well our justice worker and another rep from MMF actually sat on a provincial committee. ... the Premier's Committee for Justice. ... So we were really looking forward to that. But then the election happened, that table was dissolved, and so we kind of lost a lot of our leverage. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

A number of the other TEDWG Action Plan implementation measures were similarly positioned within policy areas outside of the formal responsibilities and capacity of municipal government,

and were thus subject to leadership and policy changes within senior levels of government.

While provincial politics were seen to influence the municipal-Indigenous interface, partnerships resulting from the TIA and TEDWG initiatives were also seen to have an influence on the decision-making of the Province of Manitoba, which has since joined the Accord table as a partner. The influence of these municipal-Indigenous relationships is also illustrated by the following comment:

...when we were lobbying for UCN, this was way back, just to get them to build it, the City of Thompson used to go meet with the province. First off the province had two different departments that we're dealing with. One was education and one was the construction side. So you used to have to go and meet with both of them. ... Then MKO would go meet with them. Then NACC would go meet with them. All separate. ... and we used to hold these sort of quarterly meetings when we were first trying to get the relationship going. And we made a commitment and an agreement with each other that we would never again meet with the Province of Manitoba without everyone ... That's when it changed because they no longer could tell us one thing, MKO another thing, and NACC something else. (Interview 8: Former Mayor)

The predominant perspective when asked about the role of provincial and federal governments in shaping the context of municipal-Indigenous relationships was that the resultant bureaucracy and red tape associated with these governments were central barriers for both municipal and Indigenous governance actors. These responses demonstrate the limitations of municipal-Indigenous interest convergence given that settler and Indigenous governance systems are multi-faceted and comprised of multiple actors with varying motivations and degrees of decision-making authority.

5.4 Symbolic Acts as Meaningful and Tangible Commitments as Tokenistic

Speaking to municipal-Indigenous relationships, scholars have stated that symbolic acts are important undertakings insofar as they are done in conjunction with more substantive policy

changes (Fawcett, Walker, & Greene, 2015). The interconnection between these types of gestures has also been examined by Peters (2013), who illustrates how the maintenance of positive settler-Laguna relationships, through the symbolic renewal of recognition and commitments, was able to create space for the Laguna people to advance their aspirations, ultimately impacting the construction of identities and place. This thesis further substantiates these findings since both the symbolic and substantive outcomes associated with TIA and TEDWG were highlighted by participants as playing an important role in creating a more mutual coexistence. However, this research builds on these understandings by analyzing the way in which these symbolic and tangible acts were distinguished as between being tokenistic or meaningful. In analyzing how symbolic gestures and more tangible policy measures were characterized by Indigenous participants, one key distinguishing factor could be seen to be the quality of relationships supporting the actions and the continued level of partnership experienced by Indigenous governance actors rather than the degrees of symbolism versus tangibility.

Despite significant overlap in the partner organizations comprising both the TIA and TEDWG initiatives, the structural differences of these mechanisms and their differing approaches with respect to implementation and continuity were seen to have implications for the sustainability of the underpinning relationships and interpretations of meaningfulness. Overall, the Accord framework was seen to be less effective at leading to tangible projects and identifiable changes, but was recognized as a mechanism which has sustained communication and engagement between Accord partners. Contrastingly, TEDWG's community planning process was associated with a number of substantive tangible projects that were undertaken in the community, but the Working Group was no longer seen to be active and there was an identified lack of continued collective action towards implementing the action plans and

sustaining those relationships. Although the outcomes of these two planning initiatives varied, participant responses indicated that the continuity and quality of relationships and the associated level of Indigenous agency within decision-making processes were more central to interpretations of meaningfulness than the symbolic or tangible nature of the outcomes in question.

Across a number of interviews participants spoke to the significance that symbolic gestures can play within the community. Speaking to municipal-Indigenous relationships in Thompson, individuals often contextualized their responses with examples of symbolic gestures, as well as more tangible commitments to change.

So when you have leadership that don't take part, that don't embrace, and that don't celebrate [Indigenous-led events in the community], that's a statement in and of itself. People notice that and it brings morale down and it just says- it speaks volumes.
(Interview 13: Former City Planner)

So little things ... even though they're small, at the end of the day they do matter because it takes into a greater context of how involved they are, how much are we considered.
(Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

The creation of the Accord table was understood to have been intentionally designed in order to facilitate and maintain cross-organizational relationships through sustained interpersonal engagement between key political actors. The following participant comments reflect the intentionality of this approach:

When we finally said look we have the original signatories to the Accord ... it can't just be a document that now gets put on a shelf and nothing happens. So how do we make it real? We said the only way we can make it real is to take it outside of those original signatories and offer everyone a chance to be involved. And so we said we're going to hold quarterly meetings, the meetings will last no longer than two hours, and all you'll ever be asked to do is bring your ideas to the table and two questions. One is what are you doing to promote the principles of the Accord and report on any achievements or success you've experienced. (Interview 8: Former Mayor)

I think the Accord was after decision-making people to participate in the Accord. So if I send staff, staff can't make decisions so they'll have to bring that back. And so I think the Accord was intended to expediate that. (Interview 7: MMF Thompson Region Vice-President)

This approach, and the informal partnerships that resulted, was acknowledged by participants as being valuable. For example, one Indigenous governance actor commented,

But it is a good table for organizations to come together to bring matters and projects that they're working on. ... And the Accord itself is a place where we advocate. And we all work with different clients. And the City of Thompson is there, Manitoba Hydro. We have a lot of investors interested in helping the Indigenous community. And that's where we sort of take action on things like the Truth and Reconciliation that's come out with residential schools. A lot of training employment programs have come out of those sort of meetings and we've been able to collaborate and create partnerships. (Interview 3: Executive Director, Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation)

While the architecture of the Accord table effectively brought various organizations together to establish those initial relationships, it was noted by a number of Indigenous governance actors that there was an identified need for these networks to be taken further and leveraged into more collaborative and Indigenous-led projects.

So basically the Aboriginal Accord was developed by TUAS. And the intent of the Accord ... was supposed to be a way to bring Indigenous issues to City Council. And what has happened is that it's more like the Aboriginal Accord we meet quarterly and everybody kind of reports on what they've kind of been doing to either support the TRC calls to action or what they've been doing in terms of supporting Aboriginal people. And so it becomes more of just a roundtable kind of thing, but no real action. (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Several participant perspectives converged around the notion that participating partners of the Accord have experienced diminished meaningfulness over time despite that the Accord function and mandate remained the same. Interviews with Indigenous governance actors suggested that the current Accord process is lacking because of the quality of the relationships and the level of political will to support actionable measures, both symbolic and more material.

While many participants recognized the meaningfulness that symbolic gestures could have within the community, other symbolic gestures were described as being characteristic of tokenism. The annual Accord celebration during National Indigenous Peoples Day is one symbolic practice that was exemplified as having been rendered tokenistic through the misrecognition of Indigenous leadership. During the National Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations new Accord partners are officially welcomed as Accord table participants. While this annual celebration and renewal of relationships was co-produced by Accord signatories, the ways in which this symbolic practice has been more recently enacted without centering Indigenous leadership and contributions led to the recontextualization of this event as tokenistic to some.

There's things like when you look at the presentation of the newest Accord members ... whereas some people didn't notice, but we noticed where the mayor was up there by himself presenting, a white settler to another white settler. Where's your partners? Where's your First Nations partners to welcome to them? To help them? To present and to welcome them into the group. Whereas they didn't consider that. Yet again, after the fact, 'oh, yeah I guess you're right.' (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

This comment is reflective of a common perspective amongst Indigenous governance actors, namely that the Accord needed to re-centre Indigenous voices and leadership in decision-making.

Well I think we're in a bit of a review process right now as to how our community works together. We can be on slippery slopes in terms of good intentions turning out to be just supporting status quo, or not recognizing when we're headed back to status quo. You know that we can't be complacent about that and I think we're kind of going through that phase right now, where you can't have a table or a room full of people making decisions on Indigenous people when they're not at the table even though the table is under that banner. (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor)

This critique was not spoken to by municipal government actors, although some noted the necessity to continuously work towards advancing relationships through continuous collaborative commitments.

And like said before, even though we've been in existence for eight years it is the fact that the benefit is getting everybody to the table on a regular basis so everybody is understanding what everybody else is doing, and sort of advancing some of those issues. But I mean we need to still take it to that next level as to sort of as a group endorsing this project or this approach. So I think that we're moving, but obviously it's likely a lot slower than what certain partners want. (Interview 2: City Manager)

In addition to chairing the quarter annual meetings of the Accord, the City of Thompson produces a report detailing signatory and partner organizations' actions that support the overarching mission of the Accord. More recently this has entailed "challeng[ing] each partner to go through the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action] recommendations and see where [they] fit as an organization and then provide a task that [they] can complete to enhance that" (Interview 4: City Mayor), which has impacted perceptions of the Accord as being a place "where [signatory and partner organizations] sort of take action on things like the Truth And Reconciliation that's come out" (Interview 3: Executive Director, Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation). However, some of the symbolic actions that have resulted from this adoption of the Calls to Action as a framework for the Accord table were provided as examples of the misrecognition occurring within City Hall.

So the City last year put a resolution I guess to kind of oppose that. To say that that was wrong. And there was three resolutions the city made, but three of the councilors got up and left when that happened. And they said it was because it wasn't on the agenda and so it took them by surprise. But that would be a questions to ask somebody in the know about. But so that just kind of showed that like obvious racism or inability to- it really showed that division in the city. (Interview 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

That was a huge statement [the TRC Report], and that really set the tone at a local level because it came to every council to endorse, right? Every council endorsed it or didn't ...

you had three Councilors that put up a fight to endorse those calls to action at the City Council level. (Interview 13: Former City Planner)

These resolutions were passed unanimously by the Councilors who remained in the Council Chambers, which included “endorsing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”, “formally renounce[ing] the doctrine of discovery and terra nullius, reaffirming the historic right of First Nations people to their traditional territories”, and identifying “recommendations for six of the calls to action put forward by the commission” (Thompson Citizen, 2016). However, the behavior of the Council members who walked out, resulted in these actions being shared as an example of the weakened municipal-Indigenous relationships in the community. While it was stated that the walk out was because the timing of the availability of the meeting agenda one Councilor commented in the press,

Terra nullius is international law. It’s the same reason why Russians have submarines under our Arctic ice. To say we can understand international law within the course of a day isn’t good enough. We’d better understand international law before we take such steps, because on the world stage, we could look like idiots if we don’t. (Thompson Citizen, 2016)

Contrastingly, a similarly divisive vote regarding the rezoning of land for the development of student housing for the UCN Campus development was recollected as an instance where racism was evident within Council Chambers, but it was perceived that “the people won that round” (Interview 10: Indigenous Governance Actor) potentially indicating that the level of involvement of Indigenous actors, which was greater in the latter example, is a key dimension of participants’ interpretations of meaningfulness.

Examples of more tangible actions taken by municipal government, again undertaken without the underpinning mutual recognition and relationships, were also interpreted as having diminished meaningfulness and impacted perceptions of the Accord as a positive mechanism.

The installment of a Community Safety Officer pilot program in partnership with the Province of Manitoba is one of these examples. Speaking to the role that municipal officials have played in supporting or championing initiatives within the community, one Indigenous participant spoke to this establishment of this program.

They created a downtown ambassador program. And they would have people just sort of patrolling the neighbourhood, keeping it safe, reporting any activities that need to go to the RCMP. ... And just having that presence so things don't escalate. Everybody has got homeless people in their communities, and we want to do what we can for them. But it's sort of kept them safe. (Interview 3: Executive Director, Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation)

This pilot project was implemented as a part of Thompson's Downtown Strategy, which has been stated to "encourage long-term and collaborative strategies among Thompson as well as neighbouring communities in addressing homelessness." (Chartrand & Bignell, 2017). However, to another participant this implementation was indicative of the lack of recognition that exists at City Hall given that this Indigenous governance actor had proposed a similar project to the City of Thompson but was not subsequently credited or involved in the program.

So in order to have that safety officer program it takes a municipality in Manitoba to be able to hold that status, and so we needed the municipality to support us. ... I had a fair amount of money I was bringing to the table, training dollars plus actual capital to buy stuff, and the City did not respond to anything. They heard the presentation, and they have a community officer program and it's very much the mirror of what I had presented. ... We should have worked in partnership. It wasn't about just training Métis people, it was meant to train Aboriginal officers in the north to be able to provide services to the smaller communities that can't afford to do their own safety officer program. (Interview 7: MMF Thompson Region Vice-President)

So while the program was implemented and represented a more proactive approach to addressing homelessness to some, this lack of engagement was a reflection on municipal-Indigenous power relations within the community to others and influenced the way in which the implementation of this program was interpreted. In this case, tangible policy and material commitments without

Indigenous participation did not equate to more meaningful interpretation than symbolic actions undertaken with more substantive levels of partnership.

The Thompson 2020 planning process, an initiative developed to respond to the closure of Vale's smeltery and refinery operations and to create workforce adjustment solutions within the community, experienced similar levels of dissatisfaction with respect to the continuity of TEDWG's relationships and the level of Indigenous governance actor involvement. It was described by municipal government actors as being a process which would "identify a number of areas where specific plans will be put into place, and some of the TEDWG documents would be advanced that way" (Interview 2: City Manager). Since that interviews was conducted, this planning process resulted in "Vale, Thompson 2020 and the Manitoba government [coming] together to host the grand opening of the Northern Workforce Development Centre" (Thompson Citizen, 2018), which builds on the Master Plan for the "Industrial Skills and Trades Training Centre (ISTTC) [which] was identified by TEDWG stakeholders as a priority project for implementation arising from the Education and Training Action Plan." (City of Thompson, 2019) This process was not perceived by Indigenous participants or one municipal government actor as being a meaningful commitment to mutualism despite the significant material contributions, since it was not constituted by sustained engagement with the established TEDWG stakeholders.

It was very much closed door when they were constructing the composition of who these project managers were to execute Thompson 2020. I believe that you had the whole plan in front of them with Thomson Economic Development Working Group. (Interview 13: Former City Planner)

Yeah, we're not too happy with the make-up of those committees. ... I think they felt that there were a lot of accusations. However, when there's nothing but older white settlers that are men on the panel then you know. (Interview 9: Indigenous Governance Actor)

This lack of engagement was rationalized given the immediacy of the layoffs and the focus on facilitating a workforce adjustment strategy for the affected Vale employees.

Like hundreds of people laid off in six months, so yeah there's more to do than there is time in the day. For sure [Thompson 2020] in absolute good faith want to involve all of those other organizations. (Interview 11: Municipal Government Actor)

In this instance settler governance actors can be seen to continue to hold unequal power with respect to mediating which Indigenous political bodies and organizations were best suited to participate within the Thompson 2020 process and their level of involvement. Speaking to this new planning process the Mayor stated,

The third bucket of work is business growth and expansion. And that one specifically we've had discussions with NCN with regards to their future plans and investment in our community. So that's a specific relation there. And the fourth one is more related to First Nations and Métis peoples in the surrounding region. It's the connectivity both from a broadband perspective, electronic, and also all-weather roads to connect the outlying communities that aren't all-weather roads. ... But taking that to a provincial initiative to ensure that all northerners have access to economies, specifically in our case to come through to Thompson. So those are the relationships that are being developed as well. (Interview 4: City Mayor)

This perspective and others are revealing of how these priorities manifested as a narrow focus on First Nation and Métis economic development and investment within Thompson, rather than engaging with the broader set of Indigenous governance actors, which was desired by Indigenous governance actors who stated that, “[t]hat’s what they should be doing. They make presentations to let’s say the Chamber. Why can’t they go to Aboriginal organizations and do the same thing? They did a presentation there.” (Interview 6, Participant 5: Indigenous Governance Actor)

Taken together these instances further demonstrate how continued engagement with Indigenous governance actors and their degree of decision-making power within planning and policy processes, from initiation to implementation, was more central to interpretations of meaningfulness than whether the actions were symbolic or more tangible and material in nature.

It could be seen that symbolic actions were constructed as meaningful if enacted appropriately and as a part of a larger vision for a more mutual coexistence, while more tangible commitments were construed as being characteristic of misrecognition. Overarching interpretations of the TIA and TEDWG processes were seen to shift over time with respect to how the underpinning interpersonal relationships were progressing and the resulting level of Indigenous involvement. This case study illustrates the non-linear progression of planning mechanisms over time and the importance of evaluating the continuity of municipal-Indigenous planning initiatives. Since the time that these interviews were conducted, Indigenous leadership was seen to be actively reshaping the Accord table to be oriented towards the mobilization of the signatories and partners in working collectively on the implementation of both symbolic and tangible actions within the community. The centrality of these Indigenous actors in driving the revitalization of the Accord table is reminiscent of the Accord's initial development and may have implications for the table's continuity as a meaningful mechanism. Changes to the federal UAS program now allows Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak to be the contribution agreement holder and administrator of the TUAS, which is a contributing factor to this recent shift.

[The] Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy have been seeking to implement a plan that will create the framework for the Restructuring of the Commitments of the Thompson Aboriginal Accord with Strategic Planning Sessions that will progress towards a 5-year framework plan that will be created to strengthen all partnerships within the MKO-TUAS, and to revitalize the partnership with the TAA, increase collaboration, re-examine governance, individual and organizational commitment, and community engagement on a regular basis, create awareness of, and celebrate accomplishments of partners, that will create a accountability plan. (MKO, 2019).

As a result of this planning, it may be that into the future the Accord will reestablish itself as an meaningful table for Indigenous signatories and partners; however, the continuity of TEDWG is less assured without any similar efforts to sustain engagement between the participating actors.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

This thesis focuses on the municipal-Indigenous planning approaches undertaken within the community of Thompson. Using a case study methodology this research began with the intention of better understanding what mechanisms and practices have been undertaken between municipal and Indigenous governance actors in the community. Beyond exploring the mechanisms themselves, further understanding of the approaches and rationales advanced by governance actors within the municipal-Indigenous interface was also sought out. In order to gain insight into these mechanisms, approaches, and their underpinning rationales, this study used the normative theories of co-production and coexistence as a framework to interrogate the unique political context of Thompson, Manitoba. Understanding the development of these initiatives contributes to the growing body of scholarship which considers how municipal-Indigenous relationships are being constructed, and which seeks to develop practices that are informed by a more equitable planning paradigm.

Four main objectives framed the undertaking of this thesis. The first of these was the development of an analytic framework grounded in the theoretical concepts of co-production and coexistence. Through deconstructing these two bodies of scholarship, an analytic framework was developed to inform the study design. This analytic framework included several driving research questions which were based on the identified formative elements of these theories. In order to apply these driving research questions to the context of Thompson, a semi-structured interview guide was developed which reflected these broad overarching questions. This analytic framework also guided the analysis of this thesis through influencing the development of codes which were applied to the interview, document, and observation data. As a result, theorizations

of co-production and coexistence were used a lens through which urban governance processes could be analyzed. Central to these theories were a number of conceptual principles such as mutual recognition and shared responsibilities. In order to use these concepts as a basis for analysis, this thesis explored the intersubjective understandings of research participants with respect to these principles by examining how urban governance actors' perceived the planning relationships and approaches occurring in the community of Thompson.

Second, this research sought to identify the unique planning mechanisms and policy processes related to municipal-Indigenous planning occurring in the community of Thompson. There is an increasing body of literature which covers the array of mechanisms that have been implemented across Canada and the various ways in which power relations have come to shape the political landscapes of these municipal-Indigenous planning initiatives. This thesis builds upon this body of scholarly work by tracing how these power relations have come to shape two prominent planning mechanisms undertaken within the community, the Thompson Indigenous Accord and the Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group. Limited scholarship has occurred on municipalities which have undertaken Indigenous accords, mechanisms which have had different takes across these varying geographies (Crookshanks, 2012; Paul, 2018). There is also lack of formal research with respect to how these Accords have come into being and their continued role in influencing the municipal-Indigenous interface. The TEDWG process, on the other hand, is an economic development process which lacks a more direct comparison within the academic literature. However, the existing analyses of Indigenous decision-making power within municipal planning processes and policy production, which have been more commonly studied, which offer a broad comparative perspective (Belanger & Walker, 2009; Fawcett, Walker, & Greene, 2015). Since municipal-Indigenous planning approaches vary according to

local Indigenous governance configurations and geopolitical realities, attention was also paid to the ways in which these configurations structured planning relationships within the context of this northern small-sized city.

This case study used two primary research methods to analyze the policy cycles of these two planning approaches, which have developed over the last decade. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with informants who were broadly characterized as being a municipal government actor or an urban-based Indigenous governance actor. Municipal government actors included current and former City of Thompson employees and City Councilors, while the category of urban-based Indigenous governance actors was comprised of Indigenous identifying community leaders, staff, and political leaders within Indigenous governments, political bodies, and non-profit organizations. The second method drawn upon was a document analysis. This document analysis primarily focused on the policies and meeting minutes of the City of Thompson, as well as news articles which could provide additional contextual information to enrich participant narratives. Documented personal reflections from informal conversations held and observations made during the approximately two and a half months spent in the community also informed this analysis, but were to a much lesser extent the focus of the analysis presented in Chapter Four. Approaching this research as a “holistic case study with embedded units” was an intentional strategy for understanding the multi-faceted factors which have shaped the political landscape of Thompson and the outcomes of the municipal-Indigenous planning initiatives to-date (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

The concept of meaningfulness was operationalized to make sense of the research findings and to build on the current discourses of co-production and coexistence. Meaningfulness was directly inferred from participant responses regarding their perceptions of the planning

processes. In considering the degrees of meaningfulness attributed to TIA and TEDWG, the prominent role that political will and interpersonal relationships played in mediating policy development and implementation became apparent. The planning processes of the Accord and TEDWG were evidenced as being able to go beyond the lack of recognition encoded in provincial planning legislation and traditional mainstream settler planning practices; however, it was also argued that these initiatives were highly subject to the waxing and waning of political will and to a lesser extent federal and provincial configurations of power.

The intention and nature of these planning initiatives then, can be understood as being divergent from mainstream municipal politics as they were purposefully designed by both municipal and Indigenous governance actors, with relatively high levels of partnership. Together these planning initiatives were seen to establish a new framework for more collaborative planning relations in the community, which formalized acknowledgements of First Nation and Métis peoples continued connections and contributions to the community and region. However, these findings also demonstrate that the initial successes and transformative objectives of these two planning approaches were influenced by the mediation of interest convergence, a lack of sustained engagement, local political shifts, Indigenous agency, and broader political choices. These factors all influenced how these planning initiatives and the associated actions resulting from them have come to be distinguished as meaningful, or not, by urban governance actors.

Indigenous respondents understood participation within local governance processes as being one pathway for advancing relationships and aspirations for a more mutual recognition, in addition to practices of self-recognition. Although in many cases urban governance processes failed to fully recognize Indigenous peoples as comprising distinctive political entities with ongoing rights and relationships with and to the community and region, Indigenous actors and in

some cases municipal government actors were seen to effectively leverage the TIA and TEDWG planning processes to advance political and cultural aspirations for coexistence. While interest convergence regarding economic sustainability presented opportunities for leveraging Indigenous agency, it was also seen to constrain the ways in which partnerships with Indigenous governance actors were framed within the community. Racism, which was established as a pervasive ideology within the community by authors Walker, Moore, and Linklater (2011), has continued to be a pervasive ideology that was seen to shape City Hall internally and municipal politics more broadly. The theme of racism was a defining feature of municipal-Indigenous planning and was iterated across interviews as a central barrier to progressing relationships. Despite these barriers every participant, with one exception, were in agreement that municipal-Indigenous relations in the community of Thompson were gradually progressing, albeit in a non-linear fashion.

One often cited drawback of using case study methodology is the limited generalizability of the research approach; however, given that this research was informed by a theoretical framework, it can be understood as having broader implications beyond the case of Thompson itself. The investigation of both TIA and TEDWG illustrates how distinctive planning mechanisms operating within the same political context have led to differing implementation outcomes and levels of continuity. Given that both of these processes share similar timelines and were undertaken by similar Indigenous governance actors, the variance between the TIA and TEDWG initiatives is indicative of the role that these mechanisms play in shaping the planning outcomes. This finding points to the importance of the structuring formal collaborative governance processes in a way that supports the overall planning objectives of municipal and

Indigenous governance actors. Thus, future research might attend to how different planning mechanisms are more or less capable of supporting these particular objectives.

Another finding of this research is the important role that political leaders were seen to play in facilitating and maintaining the foundational relationships guiding these planning processes. Furthermore, in the context of Thompson, interview data indicated that municipal administration played a less significant role in sustaining and facilitating relationships and planning commitments. Given the dynamic nature of politics, governance actors designing collaborative governance arrangements might consider how the structure of these governance arrangements can better account for a locale's respective power dynamics between administrative and political figures in order to facilitate more continuity and better interpersonal relationships. Additional research might also seek to better understand the informal capacities of bureaucrats to push up, alongside expressions of political will.

In contrast to other recent studies which have examined planning practices through the lens of co-production (Fawcett, Walker & Green, 2015; Dekruyf, 2017), the approaches of the Thompson Indigenous Accord and the Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group were found to be much more characteristic of co-production and coexistence theorizations within their respective agenda setting, policy formation, and policy adoption phases. Instead this thesis found a lack of continuity within the policy implementation and evaluation phases, which had implications for perceptions of meaningfulness. Examining the implementation of both symbolic and tangible implementation measures indicated that perceptions of meaningfulness were tied to the underpinning relationships and degrees of Indigenous agency. Interpretations of symbolic gestures as being meaningful and more tangible, and material commitments as lacking substantivity were expressed within participant narratives. Although the perceptions of urban-

based Indigenous peoples more generally were not examined, this thesis has provided a deeper insight into how municipal-Indigenous relations are being negotiated in the context of this northern community and how more equitable planning practices might be constructed into the future. Consequently, future research might consider how other planning initiatives have developed over time, and what strategies exist for sustaining relationships in the face of dynamic urban governance processes.

Appendix A

Sample Interview Guide

1. How do you self-identify?
2. What are your current and past relevant experience to municipal-Indigenous planning?
3. Who makes up the Indigenous community of Thompson?
4. What role can or does the City of Thompson play with respect to supporting the urban Indigenous community?
5. What are the political implications for the City of Thompson given the significant urban-based Indigenous population and growth trends?
6. Can you tell me about the origin and function of Thompson's Aboriginal Accord? Can you describe your experience as being a part of it?
7. How has the Accord been able to advance Indigenous interests since its inception?
8. Where is home to you?
9. Can you tell me about your experiences with the TEDWG process? To your knowledge how is implementation of the TEDWG action plans progressing?
10. What have you heard about Thompson 2020, as it relates to Indigenous partnership or engagement?
11. To your knowledge has there been instances where the City of Thompson has attempted to consult or engage with urban Indigenous communities more generally?
12. How do decisions made at city council or the administrative level impact the work of organizations or Indigenous political bodies or organizations?
13. What are some of the barriers facing either the City of Thompson or urban Indigenous people and organizations to partnering with one another?
14. Does this type of work necessitate that you go beyond your typical work duties?

15. What skills/capacities have you needed to use or develop to facilitate non-Indigenous and Indigenous partnerships or collaboration? Specifically for non-Indigenous and municipal officials and employees, what are some key skills/capacities that they can develop?
16. How does provincial and federal legislation/policy play a role in shaping municipal-Indigenous relations at the local level?
17. What would more equitable or meaningful planning relations look like to you?
18. What does self-determination for urban Indigenous people in the context of Thompson mean to you? What does it mean to be self-determining in the city?

Appendix B

Consent Form

Face-to-Face Interview-Official

Participant Consent Form

Project Title: City Planning and Indigeneity on the Prairies

Researchers:

Principal Investigator: Dr. Ryan Walker, Department of Geography and Planning, University of Saskatchewan, 306-966-5664, ryan.walker@usask.ca

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Collaborators: Prof. David Newhouse, Department of Indigenous Studies, Trent University, 705-748-1011, ext. 7497, dnewhouse@trentu.ca; Dr. Brenda Macdougall, Department of Geography, University of Ottawa, 613-562-5800, ext. 7954, brenda.macdougall@uottawa.ca

Research Assistant: Noelle Bouvier, Department of Geography and Planning, University of Saskatchewan, 204-307-0522, noelle.bouvier@usask.ca

Purpose and Objectives of the Research:

- The purpose of the research is to learn to what extent Prairie cities are engaging with Aboriginal citizens and organizations in city planning processes, and how planning practice and knowledge can be improved. Our research is taking place in Brandon, Winnipeg, Thompson, Saskatoon, Regina, Calgary and Edmonton.
- The four objectives of the research are to: (1) understand the approaches municipalities are taking to create Aboriginal planning initiatives in the city; (2) determine the state of non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal public perspectives on Aboriginal history, culture, discrimination, self-determination and aspirations for how to enhance Aboriginal presence in the public realm of city planning and design; (3) understand the current and future potential roles of urban Aboriginal organizations in city planning processes; and, (4) create a planning framework that aims to improve the state of planning practice with Aboriginal citizens and organizations in Prairie cities.

Procedures:

- You will be asked a series of open-ended questions to get your perspectives on municipal planning and local civic engagement issues in your city. Six to ten interviews of this type will be conducted in your city, with municipal officials and officials from some urban Aboriginal organizations. We are doing the same thing in six other Prairie cities.
- With your permission I would like to use an audio recorder to record our interview, which will then be transcribed and used as data in the study. You may request that the recording device be turned off at any time.
- The interview normally takes no longer than one hour, and can be carried out in a location of your choice.

- Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the procedures and goals of the study or your role.

Funded by: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Potential Risks: There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research, beyond those you may associate with speaking openly from your professional vantage point.

Potential Benefits:

We hope that this research will help to improve the ways that municipal planning is practiced with Aboriginal citizens and organizations in Prairie cities. We also anticipate that this research will help to improve the way post-secondary students in professional planning programs across Canada are educated with regard to engaging with non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal citizens, and urban Aboriginal organizations on issues of city planning with Aboriginal communities.

Confidentiality:

- Your name, and the fact that you are participating in this study, is known to Dr. Walker, Dr. Belanger, and their university research assistants. The audio file from this interview will be transcribed into a MS Word file and your name will appear at the top of that file. Walker, Belanger and their university research assistants are the only people that have access to the audio recording and transcript from this interview.
- The data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences; however, your identity will be kept confidential to the extent that you choose on page 3 where you will select the attribution that may be attached to direct quotations we report from the interview. Your name will not be listed in any publications or presentations.

Storage of Data:

- The digital voice and transcript files, and associated data analysis files, will be stored on the password protected computer drives at the Universities of Saskatchewan and Lethbridge while the data analysis is underway.
- Once the data analysis and publication of results is complete, raw data files will be stored by Dr. Walker on his password protected institutional server at the University of Saskatchewan for a period of 5-10 years, after which time it will be deleted.
- Completed consent forms will be stored in Dr. Walker's locked filing cabinet in his office at the University of Saskatchewan for a period of 5-10 years, after which time they will be shredded and disposed of.

Right to Withdraw:

- Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time, without explanation or penalty of any sort.
- Should you wish to withdraw, data from your interview will be deleted, provided that it has not already been incorporated into a publication (under preparation, review, or in final form) or into a presentation.

Follow up:

- Please keep your eye on the website of the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network (www.uakn.org), under the Prairie Research Centre, where we will load final reports from the study once the project is complete.

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