

# Urban First Nations and London Public Library: *in quest of a new path to building community*

Ontario Library Association, Super Conference 2013  
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# Purpose/agenda (official)

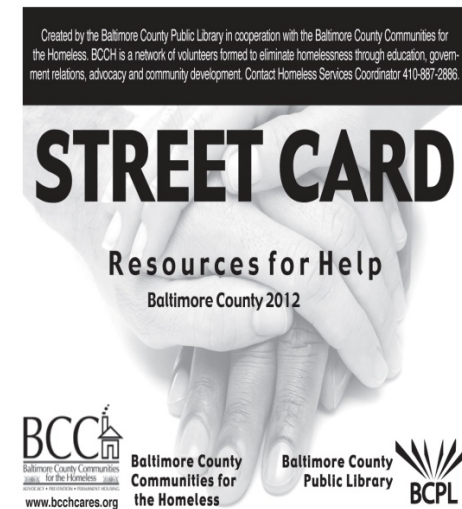
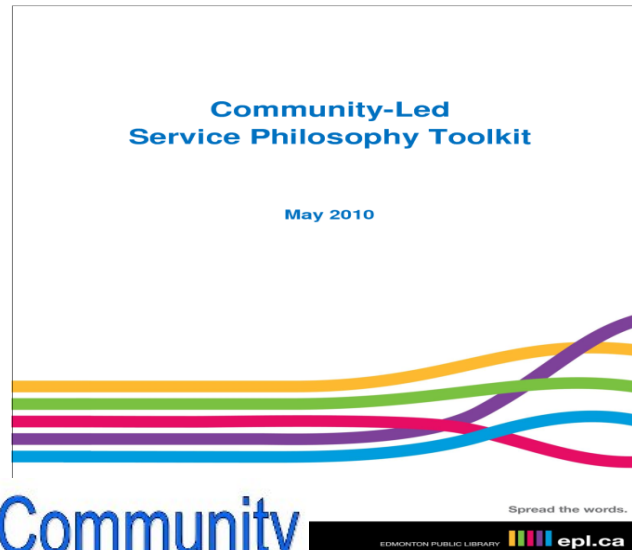
In the Spring of 2012 students in the Faculty of Media Studies, UWO, provided a blueprint for action that London PL will consider as they implement their strategic priorities for 2013: Our Presentation examines:

- The initial stages of developing library services for Urban First Nations
- reviews the project's approaches including asset mapping, engagement strategies and models of social inclusion

# Purpose/agenda (actual)

- ▶ Unravelling the paradigm of current public libraries' program and service orientation
- ▶ The search for purpose and relevance
- ▶ Preparing the next generation of librarian professionals for the emerging service reality

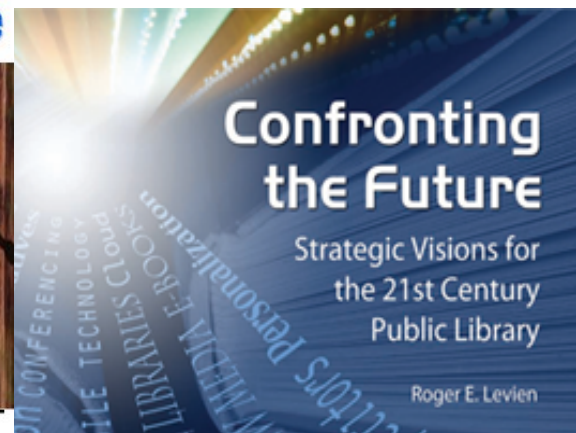
# Public Libraries' Emerging Approaches to Community Development



**Seeking Community**  
a thousand conversations to shape our future



Wednesday, January 16th





## *The FIMS Community Development Experience* – Purpose of the MLIS Class,

“[The course] provoked students to push beyond their perceived limitations”

“(A) whole new way to consider and understand libraries”

“(E)ncourages critical thinking”

“(A) whole new way to consider and understand libraries and my role as a professional”

(MLIS Students, Winter/Spring 2012)

# Getting out of your comfort zone

New steps approaches required to assure future relevancy.

# Foundational Questions (1)

**“What is the Role of a Public Library?”**

# Foundational Questions (2)

**“Who does a Public Library Serve?”**

It is impossible to overemphasize the enormous importance of people's doing things for themselves. It is the most common human reaction that successful attainment of objectives is much more meaningful to people who have achieved the objectives through their own efforts" (Saul Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals*, 1969)



“Every single person has capacities, abilities and gifts. Living a good life depends on whether those capacities can be used, abilities expressed and gifts given” (John McKnight)

**London Public Library  
“SERVING SOCIALLY  
VULNERABLE  
POPULATIONS”  
Project Proposal**

I WAS  
HERE.  
I WAS TOO

**Proposal to the  
Library Strategic Development Fund  
November 2007**



# LPL Socially Vulnerable Project

- ▶ London Public Library's vision is to be “the Community Hub that strengthens individuals, families and neighbourhoods by connecting them to relevant information, collections, programs and resources.”

We want to be at the very heart of the neighbourhoods that we serve, allowing everyone, regardless of age, race, circumstances or social background, to have access to the widest possible range of information, knowledge and services. Libraries are expected to play a major role in supporting formal education and life-long learning for everyone. We expect the facilities and services we provide to be accessible at the times when people prefer to use them; and we want the local community to be involved in shaping the scope of services that we provide.

# LPL's Approach

## Serving Socially Vulnerable Populations

Stakeholder research included focus groups with Library staff, community service providers and individuals. An analysis of the focus groups demonstrated that key themes were common throughout each of the focus groups.

Common themes included:

- Appreciation of the London Public Library's effort to provide enhanced services to vulnerable populations;
- Lack of awareness of Library services;
- Organizational culture of the London Public Library
- Interest in community collaboration;
- Perception of the London Public Library by vulnerable populations; and
- Recognition of barriers and suggestions for potential solutions.

(LPL, 2009, *Serving Socially Vulnerable Populations*)

## Performance Measures

As described above, this project will fulfill the following outcomes:

Contribution	How
Improved strategic planning or organizational management capabilities.	Strategic Plan and service model will be developed for Socially Vulnerable Populations served by London Public Library.
New partnerships or strategic alliances.	We will develop stronger, more collaboration partnerships and synergies as a result of working on this project.
Enhanced recognition for public libraries.	The issues associated with socially vulnerable populations are a significant focus in the City of London, similar to other cities. By demonstrating a strategy and service model for better serving these individuals and improving their quality of life and contributions to society, noteworthy positive recognition will be bestowed on the public library system.
Enhanced public library services.	The outcomes from this project will significantly improve our services to the socially isolated populations. Furthermore, we should observe an increase in the number of cardholders and users of the library system within this target group.
New tools, models to strengthen the library sector.	We will build both a strategy and model, out of which will come new services, programs and tools that can be applied within London Public Library and adapted to all other library systems. This will have a very positive impact on the overall library sector within Ontario.



# Potential Partners

- ▶ City of London
- ▶ Nokee Kwe
- ▶ MiddlesexLondon Health unit
- ▶ London Intercommunity Health Centre
- ▶ St. Leonard's Community Services
- ▶ YMCA of London
- ▶ CMHA
- ▶ Mission Services of London
- ▶ My Sister's Place

Met to discuss SSVP project in 2008–9. Time for another Partner consult.

# 2010–2013 LPL Strategic Plan Initiatives

## Inclusive and Accessible Services

Develop a service strategy and plan for serving First Nations, including the identification of service partners

- ▶ In 2012, staff provided support to a FIMS Faculty member in a course on Community Development. Students were assigned a project to develop a blueprint for action for LPL's consideration as we develop our service strategy.
- ▶ Staff will participate in a presentation on this topic at the OLA Super Conference in 2013
- ▶ Date to convene staff project team to be determined.

# LPL's Current Strategic Plan(1)

## **London Public Library's Vision**

London Public Library is the Community Hub that strengthens individuals, families and neighbourhoods by connecting them to people and to relevant information, collections, programs and resources.

## **London Public Library's Mission**

We are passionate about making a difference in our community, one person at a time, by enriching lives and empowering people through relevant, accessible, high quality Library services.

# LPL's Current Strategic Plan(2)

## INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	OUTCOME STATEMENTS	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
1. Accessible Services	To identify opportunities and barriers to accessing library services.	1.Review and implement recommendations of <i>Serving Socially Vulnerable Project</i> . 2.Develop a services strategy and plan for serving seniors, including the identification of service partners. 3.Develop a services strategy and plan for serving First Nations, including the identification of service partners.
2. Community Leadership	To play an active role in community development.	Review the library's role in community development and align the library and community perspective.

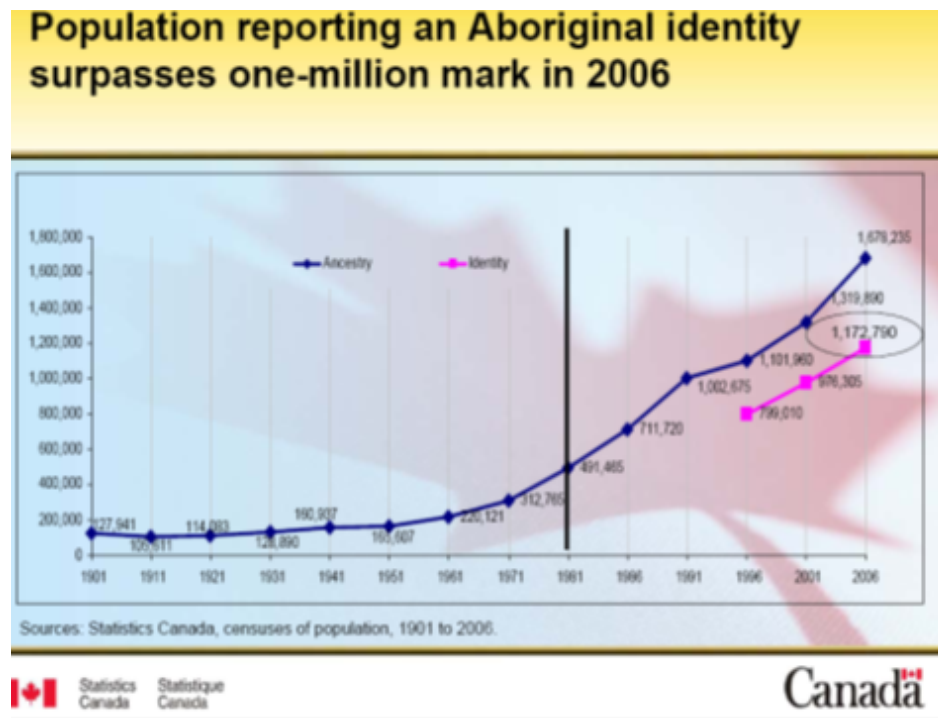
# The Forgotten Patrons

## Setting the context

- ▶ In 2006, a total of 242,500 Aboriginal people lived in Ontario representing 2.0% of the provincial population.
- ▶ There were 6,200 Aboriginal people living in the CMA of London in 2006, making up 1.4% of the city's total population. By way of comparison, Toronto had the largest Aboriginal population (26,575) of any city in Ontario, and Kenora had the largest concentration of Aboriginal people of any city in Ontario (16%).
- ▶ Between 2001 and 2006, the Aboriginal population in London grew by 10%, from 5,655 to 6,200 people.

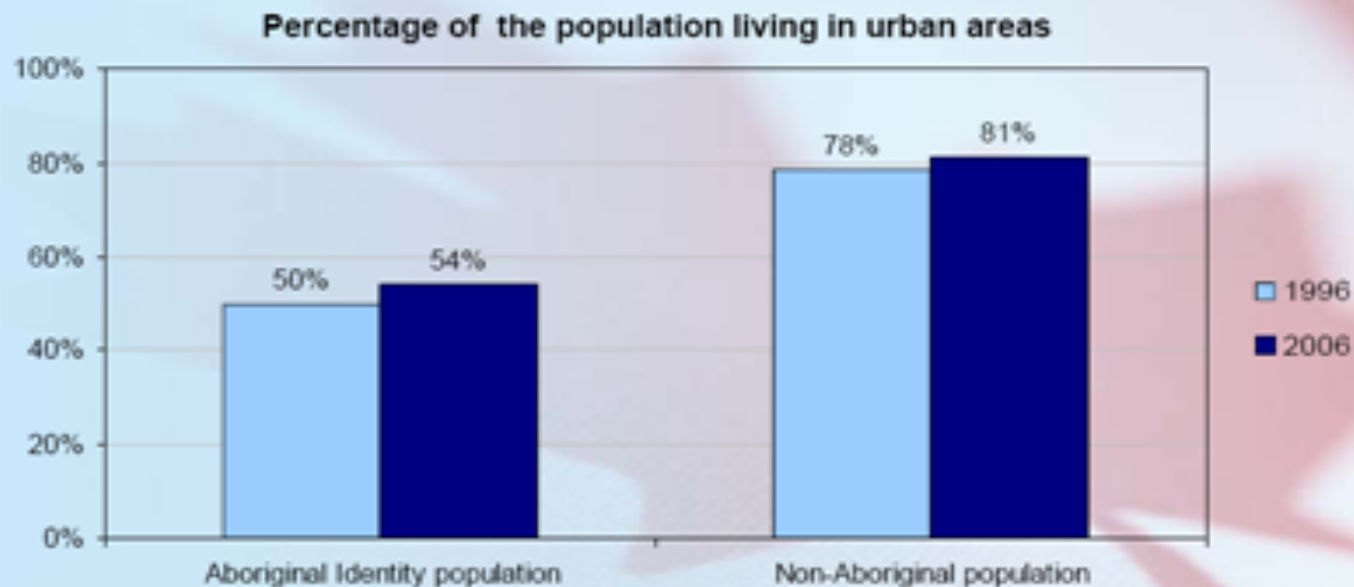


# F.N. Demographics (1)



# F.N. Demographics (2)

**One half of the Aboriginal population is urban**



Note: Data have been adjusted for incompletely enumerated reserves in 1996 and 2006.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1996 and 2006.

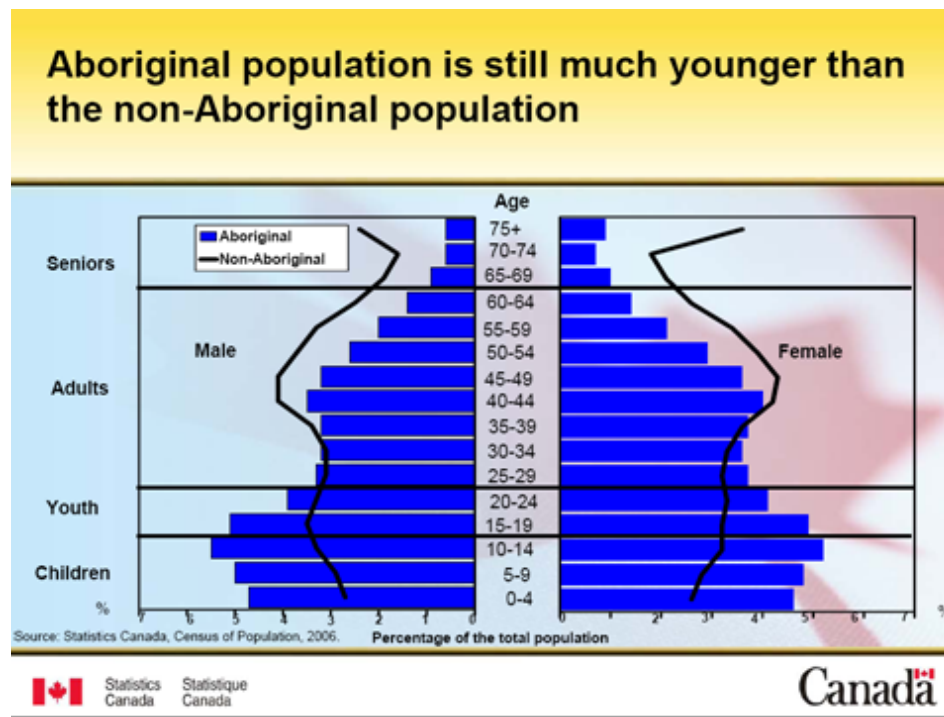


Statistics  
Canada

Statistique  
Canada

Canada

# F.N. Demographics (3)



# Class Project Outcomes

## Executive Summary

Our research demonstrates that the time is ripe for London Public Library (LPL) to focus on and expand its services to Urban Aboriginals. The desire for reconciliation between First Nation Canadians and the rest of Canada is a political and economic imperative for all stakeholders. The challenge is to adequately address past wrongs so that trust can be built. LPL is in a position to do much to contribute to healing this tenuous relationship, while also fulfilling its public service mandate, and supporting community and economic development in London.

## Executive Summary (II)

1. It can be a resource for LPL staff and administration to educate themselves about the unique circumstances, challenges, and needs of native Canadians.
2. It can be a resource contributing to and informing collection development and programming at LPL.
3. Resources can be directed at the public to increase awareness of Aboriginal Canadians' lived reality.
4. Resources can be used by LPL to inform methods of developing relationships with Aboriginals and with other service agencies working with local Aboriginal populations.



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<b>II. Legal Context</b> a. Leading Cases in Aboriginal Rights b. Domestic Legislation c. International Law d. Sources of Aboriginal Law e. Treaties & Land Claims f. Additional Relevant Organizations g. Additional Sources of Information	<b>4</b>
<b>III. Annotated Summaries of Relevant Resources</b> a. Policies b. Mobility of Urban First Nations within Urban Centres c. Housing in Urban Centres/Homelessness d. Income e. Lack of relationships between formal institutions f. Community Development in Urban Aboriginal Communities g. Community Development in Other Aboriginal Communities h. Aboriginals in London, ON i. History of Aboriginals and Libraries j. History of First Nation Peoples in Canada k. Links to Other Resources and Contacts l. Current Events m. Library Outreach n.. Collection Development o. First Nations and Public Libraries in the Atlantic Provinces	<b>8</b>
<b>IV. Contact List - London Organizations Working with First Nations</b>	<b>27</b>
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# Recommendations

1. Determine internal players in LPL who may already have contact and program experience on the issues being discussed for this program.

2. Roles and Responsibilities:

How will LPL staff learn and understand how this community development project will be undertaken. Engagement and preparation of staff and organization for the idea of forming community partnerships on this issue.

- i. Share gathered information
- ii. Have internal focus groups
- iii. Empower communication up and down and across with staff on issues

3. How will communication in the community be captured? Who is doing what now?

An Aboriginal understanding of the nature of knowledge includes a recognition and knowledge of the spirit of things and how each connects to form a whole.

(Doige, 2003).

# Approach

Traditional tribal knowledge is holistic and consistently considers the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical elements of life.

Reflects a unique way of seeing, feeling, listening, acting, and learning and centers on relationships “between self, community, nation, and creation with a focus on words, language, listening, and comprehension”.

(Doige, 2003)



Best Practices in Aboriginal Community Development: A Literature Review and Wise Practices Approach. 2010. p. 27.

# Ideas to Explore

Create a family literacy programme which reflects cultural richness modeled on the Mi'kmaq model from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Make space for aboriginal language revitalization modeled on the Vancouver and Costal Salish project.



# Operational Questions

How can we afford to start something *new* in times of fiscal austerity?

*Or*

How can we afford not to?

## First Nations Communities Surrounding London Ontario References

➤Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. *Registered Population: Chippewas of the Thames First Nation*. N.d. 13 March 2012.

[http://pse5-esd5.ainc-inac.gc.ca/FNP/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND\\_NUMBER=166&lang=eng](http://pse5-esd5.ainc-inac.gc.ca/FNP/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=166&lang=eng)

This site Provides population statistics on Chippewas of the Thames First Nation by sex, and residency status.

Provides population statistics on Munsee-Delaware Nation by sex, and residency status.

➤Chippewa of the Thames Library and Resource Centre. *Chippewa of the Thames Library and Resource Centre*. N.d. 13 March 2012. <http://library.usask.ca/native/directory/english/chippewathames.html>

Provides information on the Chippewa of the Thames Library and Resource Centre such as contact information, subject coverage, language coverage, and library hours.

➤Crime Stoppers. *Partners: First Nations*. 2012. 13 March 2012.

[http://www.londoncrimestoppers.com/site/partners/first\\_nations.php](http://www.londoncrimestoppers.com/site/partners/first_nations.php)

Provides profile information on the First Nations communities surrounding London. Includes information on history of the community, location of community, the area of land the community has, and the population size of the community.

➤First Nations, Metis, and Inuit (FNMI). *First Nations Partners*. N.d. 12 March 2012.

<http://www.tvdsb.ca/FNMI.cfm?subpage=147550>

Provides First Nation Communities surrounding London background information and more specifically how they access education and schools.

➤Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. *Registered Indian Population by Sex and Residence 2009*. 2010. 12 March 2012. [http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2010/ainc-inac/R31-3-2009-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2010/ainc-inac/R31-3-2009-eng.pdf)

Provides statistics on First Nation populations by sex and residence for 2009.

➤Iroquois Indian Museum. Oneida, Ontario. N.d. 12 March 2012.

<http://www.iroquoismuseum.org/oneida,%20ont.htm>

Website that provides a profile of the Oneida community focusing on history in regards to land, and services in the community.

Andrews-Irwin, OLA, 01/02/13

➤London District Chiefs Council. *London District Chiefs Council Members and Contact Information*. N.d. 14 March 2012. <http://www.sfns.on.ca/pages/aboutldcc.html>.