CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE

URBAN INDIAN SURVEY AND

NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Prepared and Submitted by

American Indian Development Associates

August 2011

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INTRODUCTION

Presenting Concerns

The City of Albuquerque Family and Community Services Department noted the lack of updated information on the needs and wants and service gaps for Native Americans living in Albuquerque. The urban Native American or Indian population in Albuerquerque is 32,571 and within Bernalillo County the population is 40,444 (See Table 1).

Table 1. American Indian/Alaska Native Population for City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County, NM

City	Total All Races	Total AI/AN Alone	Total AI/AN Multi-Race	Total AI/AN Alone or in Comb	Total AI/AN Alone Youth (0-17)
Albuquerque	545,852	25,087	7,484	32,571	7,201
County					
Bernalillo Co.	662,564	31,744	8,700	40,444	8,983
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, PL 94-171 Redistricting File, Table prepared by Norm DeWeaver, Policy Analyst 4-18-11					

In an effort to understand the needs and wants of its urban Native American population the City of Albuquerque through the Family and Community Services Department initiated an assessment to gather information from programs and Native American citizens.

The Department's mission is to "…provides quality health and social services, housing, recreation and education to improve the quality of life for the entire Albuquerque Community." To implement this mission with urban Native Americans, the Department highlighted the importance of obatining qualitative information from programs serving (or could serve) Native Americans and to hear directly from Native American citizens. To conduct the assessment, the Department enlisted assistance from an Indian women owned firm located in Albuquerque to update information on the needs of urban Native Americans and to identify service gaps.

Survey and Needs Assessment Purpose

The assessment purpose was to obtain input from Native American citizens to gain qualitative information on perspectives about current needs and wants, to identify service gaps, and ways to improve programs and services by the City and/or other organizations. A secondary purpose is to use the findings to help guide future program development the Family and Community Services Department provides or influences.

METHODOLOGY

The following steps guided implementation of the assessment methods and approaches and contributed to the assessment processing being culturally relevant and respectful.

1. Identification and engagement of program stakeholders for program interviews.

2. Identification and recruitment of participants for two focus groups.

3. Development ofa program data collection instrument (DCI).

4. Data collection and data entry.

5. Analysis of findings and results.

6. Preparation of the report.

The table below summarizes the data gathering strategies for the community assessment questionnaire and the focus group sessions.

Table 2. Data Gathering Strategies

Description	Program Assessment Questionnaire	Focus Groups
Target Populations	N=13	N=41 participants
Targeted Respondents	Programs serving Native Americans	Open invitation
Interviewers	Two Indigenous Interviewers	Two AIDA Facilitators
Number of Questions	17 Item questionnaire	Open-ended questions
Length of Activity	40-60 min.	1 to 2 hours per session

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PROGRAM INTERVIEWS - FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Program Respondents

AIDA and the Family and Community Services Department jointly identified programs to interview. An initial list yielded approximately 19 programs with 13 program staff participating in the assessment. Two AIDA interviewers contacted program directors and/or managers to set up interviews. Interviews began in mid July and ended August 12, 2011. The programs identified for interviews included the following, an asterik indicatesthe programs that participated:

1. Albuquerque Healthcare for the Homeless*
2. Albuquerque Indian Center*
3. Albuquerque Indian Health Board *
4. APS Indian Education
5. BIA Social Services
6. Creator Connections Ministries*
7. First Nations Community Health Source*
8. IHS Albuquerque Hospital
9. Nation Indian Youth Council*
10. National Indian Council on Aging*
11. Native American Community Academy*
12. Native American Professional Parent Resource*
13. New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty*
14. RainCloud LLC
15. Rape Crisis Center of Central New Mexico*
16. Southwest Youth Services*
17. Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute*
18. UNM Health Services
19. Urban Indian Advocacy Program

The program interviews yielded a 68% response rate. Three respondents were not available due to vacations or business-related travel, two did not respond and one person declined the interview. Programs interviewed had been operating on average 23.6 years, with a mininum of 6 years to a maximum of 39 years.

Programmatic Interview Results

*Referral Processes:*All programs had multiple processes in place to receive referrals, which included: Verbal phone referrals (n=8), face-to-face referrals (n=8), Using standardized forms (6), Clients recommended to access your program's services or resources (6), Other (n=10).

Access to Other Services Clients Need: All programs reported assisting clients to obtain services or resources not available from their program. Most made <u>written referrals</u> to other service agencies. All but one assisted clients to make <u>service connections and set appointments</u> for clients. At least one agency had <u>co-located facilities,</u> which made referrals to other agencies easier. Three agencies had <u>formal agreements</u> such as memorandum of agreements or understanding (MOA/MOU) with other agencies to obtain needed services or to refer clients. One had <u>emergency funds</u> to obtain other services. Three indicated having extensive <u>service networks</u> and <u>partnerships</u> to refer clients for needed services or resources.

Referral and Service Networks: Programs identied 39 specific programs or agencies they used to refer clients when they could not provide services to clients. These included:

1. Albuquerque Indian Center (AIC)
2. Albuquerque Senior Center and Community Centers
3. All Indian Pueblo Council (AIPC)
4. Almas De Amistad
5. American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC)
6. Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) daycares
7. APS elementary, middle and high schools
8. Bernalillo Co. Native American Health Council
9. Catholic Services
10. City of Albuquerque
11. Central New Mexico (CNM)-Connect
12. Department of Health
13. Department of Labor
14. Education for Parents of Indian Children with Special Needs (EPICS)
15. First Nations Community Health Source (FNCH)
16. Goodwill
17. Health Care for the Homeless
18. Indian Health Service (IHS)
19. Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (IPCC)
20. Joy Junction
21. Metropolitan homeless project
22. National Indian Youth Council (NIYC)
23. Native American Churches
24. Native American Health Initiative
25. Native Pride
26. NM AIDS services
27. NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (NM DVR)
28. NM Long-term Aging
29. Noon Day
30. Road Runner
31. Section 8 Program
32. Social Services Administration
33. Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI)
34. Store House
35. SW Youth Services
36. University of New Mexico (UNM) school based health provider
37. UNM-Community Learning and Public Service/Americorp& Vista
38. Vocational Rehab
39. Women, Infant Child (WIC) Programs

Use of Cultural Approaches: Six programs indicated using cultural approaches frequently, three sometimes, one rarely and one never. Programs that were specifically for urban Indians or had a high number of Indian clients were more likely to use cultural approaches.

Ways Cultural or Tribal Based Approaches Used to Assist Native Americans: Ten programs identified four different ways they implemented cultural or tribal based approaches. One program had written policies to support the use of cultural or tribal based approaches. These policies were used to guide service providers to ascertain client needs and to show respect for tribal based protocols.

Four programs incorporated cultural approaches in their programs and service delivery. Examples included sweat lodge ceremonies, blessing and/or healing prayer services, cultural mentorship, traditional counseling, traditional massage therapy, use of storytellying, and use of traditional arts for therapy.

Three programs provided cultural senstivity and/or competency training to their staff, especially for non-Native American staff. Programs developed culturally relevant materials and curriculum to use for staff orieintation and training. They also included traditional service learning activities to help staff learn about Native American history, culture, and governments. Topics also addressed specific service areas such as health, justice, and education; age and

gender issues for children, females, elders; and other target populations, such as the homeless, juvenile delinquents, among others.

Two programs relied on <u>Native American program or contracted staff</u> to provide culture or tribal based services, which included treatment, counseling, ceremonies, and teaching cultural education clasess. In some cases, Native American staff were able to provide services in the client's tribal language. Having Native American staffs were credited for having a welcoming atmosphere for Native American clients.

Adequacy of Existing Services: Most felt they provide quality services, but felt that services suffered from the lack of adequate funding to meet needs. Inadequate funding also limited the level of services programs could provide, for example inpatient treatment is available for few clients, some clients need specialized or prolonged assistance that is not possible with limited funds. Two programs indicated that case overloads limited the amount of time spent on individual cases. One program highlighted the need for better partnerships with Native American organizations to provide cultural education and/or competency training to their staff to improve cultural sensitive provsion of services.

Urban Indian Needs: Respondents identified the top three needs of urban Indians that fell into the following six categories.

1. *Advocacy Support:* Respondents highlighted the lack of advocacy for urban Indian needs and issues within City government and other agencies. Urban Indians are not consulted on issues or needs and have few opportunities to provide input on decisions that affect them. Without input from the urban Indian population, City officials including programs make uninformed decisions that may not represent what urban Indian people need or want.

2. *Access and Usage of Services:*More targeted marketing is needed to attract and convince urban Indians to use available services.

3. *Cost of Living:*Urban Indians experiencing economic stress and need assistance to meet basic needs for transportation, affordable housing, healthcare, childcare, and food assistance.

4. *Education:* APS administration needs to provide better and more services for urban Indian children and youth through cultural programs. The also need to make appropriate use of federal funding they receive for Indian children. More financial assistance is needed to address the gap in urban Indians post high school education.

5. *Employment:* Urban Indians need employment assistance to find and keep jobs, and job skills training.

6. *Health and Social Services:* Some urban Indians have no health care coverage. Some need health insurance to cover expenses for special medical needs that the IHS will not or cannot provide. Few healthcare options exist for homeless urban Indians. More services are needed to help urban Indians with substance abuse problems, family violence and victimization problems, among other crime and violence issues. Programs need to be

more culturally sensitive and robust and provided by culturally informed or competent providers.

Recommendations for City Agencies Identified by Program Respondents

Program respondents provided recommendations for City agencies that fell into seven categories.

1. *Cost of Living:* Provide more assistance to help urban Indian families and individuals to meet basic needs by providing childcare assistance, transportation assistance, housing assistance and home loans.

2. *City or Agency:* Recommendations included:

   a. Create a strategic plan that addresses all the needs of urban Indian families and individuals.

   b. Enlist Native American businesses to create an overall strategy for economic development for land located next to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center.

   c. Identify ways to use tourist revenues to support urban Indian programs.

   d. Conduct ongoing urban Indian needs assessments to stay informed about the needs of this population.

   e. Collaborate with federal or private foundations to conduct a pilot project focused on improving services for urban Indian populations.

   f. Increase funding for programs that serve urban Indians.

3. *Education:* Provide more assistance to help urban Indian students graduate from high school and pursue post high school education. This will help to address the educational gap of urban Indians. Work with APS to provide better services to urban Indian students and require progress reports for improvements in student success.

4. *Employment:* Assist programs serving urban Indians to provide or make linkages to programs that can provide employment assistance, job skill training and job retention.

5. *Families:* Assist programs to develop mentoring programs for urban Indian youth. Special mentoring programs should be established for youth reentering the community after long-term incarceration, or other custodial placement, or inpatient treatment.

6. *Health & Social Services:* Recommendations included:

   a. Creation of policies that require programs to develop cultural competency training aimed at improving service delivery and case management. This should include education on needs of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender urban Indians.

b. Ongoing needs assessments should be done to understand the healthcare and social service needs of homeless urban Indian families and individuals.

7. *Improve Relationships:*Recommendations included:

a. The City should establish and "open-door" policy to encourage Native Americans to voice their concerns, needs, issues and wants to City officials.

b. Increase funding for tribal liaison positions in City departments that can provide services or resources to address urban Indian needs and wants.

c. Increase efforts to recruit urban Indians to serve on City boards, commissions, and task forces, etc. to represent and voice the needs of urban Indians.

d. Designate a City Council seat for an urban Native American.

e. Develop and implement policies that require cultural education and competency training for City officials, employees and contractors.

f. Aggressively enforce laws and policies that address discriminatory or racist conduct by City employees against Native Americans by prosecuting and/or reprimanding offenders.

g. Conduct government-to-government consultation with Tribal governments to discuss and work at addressing urban Indian needs, issues and wants collaboratively.

FOCUS GROUP - FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Participant Information

Two focus groups were conducted on August 10, 2011 at the Cesar Chavez Community Center. Participants included 39 Native American citizens and two non-Native citizens.Participants represented 13 tribes, with half representing tribes located outside of New Mexico.

Thefocus group approach was a democratic and inclusive process, in that every perspective was valued and given a voice. The process was comprehensive in that all aspects of problem or issues, strengths, barriers and solutions were covered. It is inductive, in that listening to and recording the experiences of the Native Amercan citizens provided information to identify issues and needs, barriers and possible solutions for the City to consider.

Focus Group Results

Participants were asked to provide comments and perspectives in four areas related to life in the City. These included comment on: 1) Problem, issues or needs; 2) Strengths or positive experiences living in the City; 3) Barriers to services, and 4) Possible solutions.
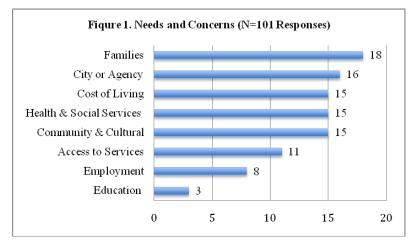
The qualitative information from the focus groups provided information that was categorized into the followingcategories for each area of inquiry.

1. Access & Usage
2. City or Agency
3. Community & Cultural
4. Cost of Living

5. Education
6. Employment
7. Families
8. Health & Social Services

Area 1 - Problems, Issues or Needs and Area 3 - Barriers

Focus group participants were asked about the problems, issues or needs that urban Native Americans experience living in the City. Figure 1 indicates the frequency of reponses in eightcategories.

Figure 1. Needs and Concerns (N=101 Responses)

1. *Access & Usage of Services:*Responses for this subcategory fell into three areas:

a. *Technology:* Elders noted difficulty in accessing services that require computers and other automated or digitized mechanisms that they either don't have or have limited knowledge on how to use them. Others noted the lack of access to computers also hindered their ability to apply for services,

financial support, and jobs online, or to conduct research on available resources when you don't have transportation.

b. *Unaware of Where to Start:* Several indicated that it is hard to find out about what services are available for urban Indians and where they are located. The lack of outreach by agencies was cited as the cause for few people knowing about resources.

c. *Service Denials:* Frustration at not being able to obtain various needed services was noted by urban Native Americans from out-of-state Tribes. Denials were experienced from City and Indian-specific programs. Urban Indians from New Mexico also noted that they were often being told to return to their home Tribes to obtain services even when the agency appeared to be able to provide the service.

2. *Concerns with City or Agency:* This subcategory identified the following four issues:

a. *Native American NeedsMinimized:* Native American needs and issues are not a priority for many city and other governmental agencies.Most governmental agencies are unaware of urban Native American issues, needs and wants, which becomes a continuing problem because of the minimal effort to find out what Indian people need or want.City and other service organizations conduct little outreach to urban Native Americans to encourage their use of services available to all citizens.

b. *Lack of Tribal or Cultural Knowledge:* City and other governmental or service agencies are not culturally informed or misinformed which affects many aspects of service delivery to urban Native Americans. The lack of cultural knowledge hinders the ability to provide quality service and effectively reach out to urban Indians.Many governmental workers are misinformed about the urban Indians access to services from their Tribes. As a result, urban Indians are often told to obtain needed services from their Tribe, even when the Tribe is located outside of New Mexico. Even when agencies can provide services to urban Indians, they pass the responsibility to others to avoid providing services to Indian people. This is a discriminatory practice that leads to urban Indians not receiving assistance.

c. *Few Native American Staff:* There are only a few Native Americans serving as liaisons in city and other governmental agencies to advocate for the needs of urban Indians. Similarly there are few Native Americans in high or mid-level positions to manage programs or provide services.Because the Native American population in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County is small, their needs and wants are minimized.

d. *Lack Native American Input:* Few opportunities exist for urban Native Americans input on program development; management of existing programs, such as the Albuquerque Indian Center (AIC); identifying needs and priorities, and decisions about what services or programs should be funded or discontinued.In some instances there is political interference over how an Indian-specific program should be managed.

3. Community & Cultural: This subcategory identified four areas of concern:

    a. *Acculturation Challenges:*Native Americans move to the City for various reasons and sometimes the move can cause "culture shock" and confusion about how to get assistance from unfamiliar environment, sources and people.

    b. *Lack of Cultural Resources:*Making the adjustment from a tribal-way of life to city-life could be easier if more cultural resources were available. The lack of an intertribal cultural center adds to the difficulty of urban Indians to gather together for social events andnetworking to build a sense of community, and to address issues in a unified fashion.

    c. *Prejudice:*Some participants felt that prejudice, racial tension or discrimination existed and was the cause of service denials, getting a job, a loan, housing, healthcare, etc. Civil right violations and mistreatment of homeless urban Indians by the Albuquerque Police Officers were also cited.

    d. *Community Input:*The lack of community input on urban Indian issues was also noted as the reason for minimal response to needs and wants. There appeared to be minimal effort to use local tribal groups such as the All Indian Pueblo Council to provide input on urban Indian needs and to solicit their support for building an intertribal cultural center.

4. *Cost of Living Concerns:* Participants identified concerns in the three main areas below:

    a. *Transportation:* Participants noted the hardship caused by the inability to buy a vehicle and keep up with maintenance or to pay for public transportation. This issue was cited as a contributing factor for not being able to obtain needed services such as healthcare, keeping appointments, finding work or keeping a job, shopping for groceries and other items, entertainment, among others.

    b. *Housing:* Access to affordable housing was cited as a factor causing immense financial strain and having to choose over what to pay for—utilities, rent, mortgage or repairs—over food and other necessities. Finding a place to stay during difficult times also contributed to individual and family homelessness. While participants felt the urban Indian homeless problem was significant, it was pointed out that the rate was not known.

    c. *Financial Issues:* The inability to acquire "safe" loans during hard times or to obtain down payments on vehicles, homes or large ticket household items also added to financial stress. Although most had jobs, not having a living wage strained the ability to pay for basic needs, obtain wants for children, save money, or to qualify for loans. The lack of disposable income for entertainment or recreation also added to financial strain. The lack of financial literacy was cited as a cause for poor financial management, not having a budget, and making poor financial decisions. Being in the City also limited access to extended family living on the reservation.

5. *Education:*This subcategory focused on the educational needs of children and youth:

a. *Tutoring support:* Financially stressed families have a difficult time obtaining tutoring for their children. Most cannot afford to pay for tutors or to provide transportation.

b. *College Prep:* Few Indian youth go on to college and need extra support to prepare for college exams such as the ACT or SAT, to apply for college, and/or fill out scholarship applications. Often Indian students are the first in their family to think about going to college, which limits parental support to help with these tasks.

c. *Cultural Programs in School:* Most urban Indians are minorities in the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS). As a result, few cultural resources, clubs or programs are available, even when APS receives funding for having Native American students. Often this federal funding is used for other purposes remotely benefitting Indian children.

6. *Employment:* Comments fell into two subcategories:

a. *Job Search Assistance:* Training to conduct online job searches is needed, which could also be supported with a resource library. Assistance in developing resumes and interview skills were also noted. Job searchers need help networking with Native American businesses or resources such as the American Indian Chamber of Commerce (AICC).

b. *Skill Development:* Extensive support is needed for job training to be competitive in the current economic environment. Mentoring support is needed to help people learn needed skills, knowledge and abilities; including good work habits and ethics.

7. *Families:*This subcategories identified the following issues:

a. *Family Strain:*Poor wages, lack of competitive education levels, growing families with multiple needs contributes to family strain because parents cannot afford to pay for everything. Sometimes it contributes to strain on family relationships between intimate partners, spouses, and children. It also contributes to poor and or unhealthy decisions that can be self-destructive and further family strain. Urban Indian families experience added stress from their lack of access to extended family resources when needed.

b. *Children:* The lack of cultural programming for children in schools or daycare center makes it "tough" for young children to acclimate to life in the city. This causes them to become withdrawn and afraid to voice their needs or wants. When they do, they are not heard!

c. *Adolescents:* There are few after school activities (sports and non-sport) that support positive development for young people.There are no places for urban Indian youth to mingle, to obtain tutoring, or to participate in service learning activities.

d. *Reentry Support for Youth:* Delinquent urban Indian youth lack adult urban Indians to serve as mentors. There are limited services or transitional homes available for incarcerated urban Indian youth released from long-term commitments. Support is needed to help reentering youth get back into school, get a job, a place to live or to prevent relapse into addictions or reoffending.

e. *Elders:* Culturally relevant homecare is needed for elders that are homebound, but still able to live in their homes. The lack of culturally relevant services and programs hinders participation by elders. Often they are the "only brown person" participating and still feel "alone in a crowd." Few urban Indian elders use the elder lunch program or meal delivery service because they can't drive or do not own a vehicle. Most do not know how to use computers and cannot fill out online applications for service.
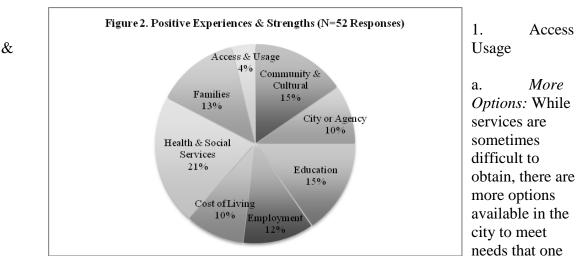
8. *Health & Social Services:*

a. *Inadequate Services:* The lack of sufficient funding is thought to be the primary cause for inadequate and poor quality services. Social service programs serving urban Indians are strained by case overloads. Often there are not enough staff to provide the level of services need, i.e., substance abuse counselors or therapists. Lack of funding limits the number of staff and specialized services available. Additionally, staffs are not culturally informed to provide culturally appropriate services in sensitive and respectful ways. Too many social service programs have been cut from the Albuquerque Indian Center (AIC).

b. *Awareness of Programs:*Often urban Indian people are not aware of the services and resources available from governmental agencies. This is due in part by the lack of outreach and marketing that is appealing, respectful and targets urban Indians.

c. *Staff Mistreatment:* The lack of structure in some urban Indian programs has allowed staff to be mistreated by clients that come to offices under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Program staffs need training to deal with clients that are loitering, intoxicated, belligerent, or difficult.

d. *Healthcare:*Urban Native Americans have few choices to obtain affordable healthcare. Most cannot afford private healthcare due to the lack of health insurance. Many work for companies that do not provide healthcare. Indigent urban Indians are told to obtain healthcare from their tribal sources such as their own Tribe or Indian Health Service. Funding for urban Indian healthcare has shut down to many needed programs and services and increased difficulty to obtain specialized services for elders and citizens.

Area 2 – Positive Experiences and Strengths

Focus group participants were asked to share some of their positive experiences living in Albuquerque and strengthsto build upon. Figure 2 indicates the percentage of reponses in eight categories.

Figure 2. Positive Experiences & Strengths (N=52 Responses)

1. Access & Usage

   a. *More Options:* While services are sometimes difficult to obtain, there are more options available in the city to meet needs that one agency cannot provide or refuses.

   b. *Lower Cost:* People can afford services that are less costly and more services are available at reduced prices or may be subsidized.

2. City or Agency

   a. *Indian-Specific Services:* There appears to be more opportunities for Indian-specific programs to be developed such as the following: First Nations, AIC, NIYC, Rain Cloud LC, New Day, St. Martins, IHS, SIPI Dental, SIPI Ed., Futures for Children. These programs provide healthcare, dental care therapy and counseling, social services, employment support, homeless shelter, college education, and children's programs.

   b. *Tribal Liaison:* The City of Albuquerque Family and Community Services Department has maintained a tribal liaison for a number or years.

   c. *Interest in Improving Services to Urban Indians:* There appears to be renewed commitment to provide services to urban Indians and supporting culturally relevant and appropriate programs and services.

3. Community & Cultural

   a. *Feel Welcome:* Participants indicated feeling welcome living in the City and being treated with respect.

   b. *More Options:* There are more choices for entertainment and recreation that is age appropriate and/or family-oriented.

   c. *Exposure to Other Cultures:* By having neighbors, colleagues, work mates, schoolmates, etc. from other cultures promotes open-mindedness.

4. Cost of Living

a. *Improved Standard of Living:* Moving to the City enabled some participants to get better jobs with better wages. Others were able to keep jobs because of the City's reliable transit system.

5. Education

a. *Indian Education:* The Native American Community Academy is an important accomplishment that focuses on teaching urban Indian students with a majority of staff and faculty being Native American. Also the APS Indian Education program is good at promoting Native American values to students.

b. *Colleges and Universities:* UNM and CNM provide good opportunities for urban Indian students and are supportive by creating Indian studies, cultural programs, clubs, and scholarships.

6. Employment

a. *Job Options:* More job options exist with better pay and upward mobility.

b. *Work for Disabled urban Indians:* Participants indicated more opportunities existed for disabled persons for job training and employment.
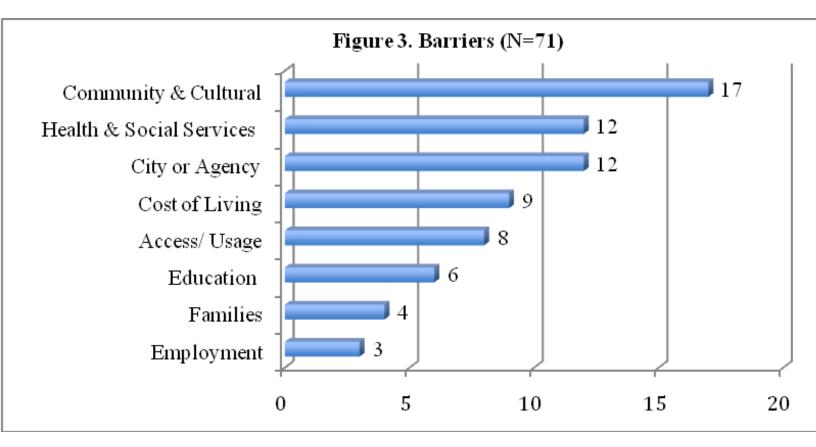
7. Families

a. *Family-Oriented Options:* More options exist for families to participate in activities that involve the whole family. Often activities are free.

b. *More Childcare Options:* Working parents have more options to find affordable childcare.

8. Health & Social Services

a. *Indian-Specific Services:* Programs specifically for urban Indians have made a difference in helping Indian citizens acquire services. They are able to provide advocacy on many areas related to healthcare, domestic violence, homelessness, among other issues.

b. *Healthcare:*First Nations is able to provide needed healthcare.

c. *Social Services:* Shelter support is available for homeless urban Indians. More services are available for those with special needs, physical or learning challenged.

Area 3 – Barriers Addressing Weakness and Challenges

Focus group participants were asked to identify barriers that urban Indian experience trying to address needs and concerns or to build upon strengths. Figure 3 indicates the frequency of reponses in eight categories.

Figure 3. Barriers (N=71)

Category	Value
Community & Cultural	17
Health & Social Services	12
City or Agency	12
Cost of Living	9
Access/ Usage	8
Education	6
Families	4
Employment	3

1. Access & Usage

   a. *Multi-citizen Issues:* Urban Indians from Tribes outside New Mexico retain citizenship with their own Tribe and become city and state citizens when they relocate. The later two should enable their access to services available to all citizens, but that they are frequently refused services.

   b. *Under Utilization of Services:* Several factors impact this barrier that include poor outreach by governmental agencies, clients not knowing how to use the system, affordable transportation, and racial discrimination concerns.

2. City or Agency

   a. *Lack of Cultural Knowledge by Governmental Agencies and Staff:* This issue prevents effective and responsive services to urban Indian populations.

   b. *Control of Indian-Specific Programs:* Political interference and control over tribal programs was seen as a barrier to effective management of programs. Adding to this issue was the lack of Indian people to manage such programs.

    c. *Lack of Adequate Funding:* This issue hinders effective service delivery with the number and variety of services and quality of services that programs can provide.

3. Community & Cultural

    a. *Minimal Support for Intertribal Center:* The lack of a well-funded intertribal cultural center comparable to that of the Hispanic and African American centers contributes to urban Indians inability to be unified in addressing issues, needs and wants. It prevents intertribal cultural exchange and peer support at the individual, family and targeted age group levels.

4. Cost of Living

    a. *Access to Resources:* Most barriers involved an individual or family's ability to access needed resources to supplement their own efforts to meet basic needs, obtain wants, and save money. Access to resources for emergency situations is critical for those on the brink of homelessness.

    b. *Financial Literacy:* Learning to live in the city requires good budgeting strategies and training for managing finances, and learning how to apply for loans.

5. Education

    a. *Funding Education:* Access to scholarships makes it difficult for Indian students to pursue post-high school education. In some instances, working single adults without children often do not qualify for scholarships even if there income is not high.

    b. *APS Inappropriate Use of Tribal Funding:* APS receives federal funding for urban Indian students, but often this funding is not used to support cultural programs such as Indian-specific classes, clubs, or activities. More accountability is needed to ensure funding is used for the intended purposes.

6. Employment

    a. *Lack of Competitive Skills:* The national economy is affecting jobs available in the City. Therefore, urban Indians need focused training to be competitive in the job market.

7. Families

    a. *Peer Tribal Support is Lacking:* Urban Indians move to the City for various reasons, but often long for connections to tribal cultural and to teach and maintain cultural values for their children. A thriving urban Native American community is needed to promote peer support among families and for intergenerational communication and interaction.

8. Health & Social Services

    a. *Lack of funding for Urban Indian Programs:* Funding shortages for programs limit what can be provided or accessed by urban Indian people most in need.

    b. *Lack of Cultural Informed Staff:* This issue is a barrier for urban Indians who feel that service providers are disrespectful, or not patient with clients that are not fluent in English or require interpretation.

Area 4 – Recommendations From Focus Groups

Focus group participants were asked to identify solutions and make recommendations. Figure 4 indicates the percentage of reponses in seven categories.
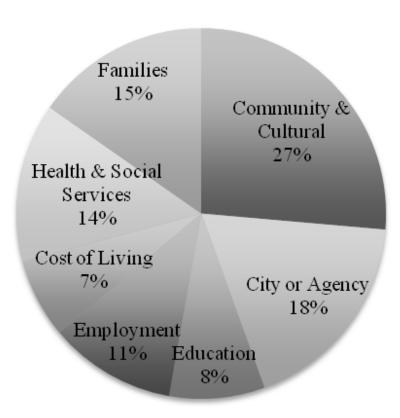

Figure 4. Solutions & Recommentations (N=72 Responses)

1. Access & Usage

    a. Develop targeted and culturally respectful marketing strategies that encourage urban Native Americans to use available services and resources. Use media, such as

Channel 27 and public radio (89.1 and 89.9) segments such as Singing Wire and Native America Calling to provide information specifically targeting urban Indians.

2. City or Agency

    a. Increase access to Tribal Liaisons and increase authority of liaisons for policy development and funding decisions.

    b. Increase advocacy by Native American citizens and lobbyist.

    c. Conduct cultural education for governmental staffs, agencies and contractors.

    d. Conduct regular forums to obtain urban Indian input on needs and wants and to jointly develop strategies to overcome barriers, develop solutions and implementation strategies.

    e. Support development of an Albuquerque newspaper or newsletter; and create a City Facebook for urban Indians.

    f. Require Native American preference in contracts to provide services to urban Indian populations. This will help to get rid of the "good ole boy" preference currently hindering provision of culturally competent service delivery.

3. Community & Cultural

    a. Develop strategies for intertribal collaboration, communication and interaction that will enable peer support and working together on issues, needs and wants.

    b. Build intertribal center for all Tribes to use for arts, theater, music, education, events, etc. and that includes a museum.

    c. Sponsor urban Indian markets year round.

4. Cost of Living

    a. Provide financial literacy programs and delivery in places accessible to urban Indian people, possibly using the AICC.

    b. Provide supplemental transportation support, e.g., bus passes for students and families, or those without a living wage.

    c. Support micro business funding and development by urban Indians and expanding services available through the AICC.

5. Education

    a. Work with local colleges and universities to develop an Albuquerque Indian newspaper.

b. Create an urban Native American website that includes information on education and student resources, such as Title VII resources with APS.

c. Work with APS administration to establish cultural programs, clubs and activities targeting urban Indian students.

d. Strengthen the Native American Community Academy with funding and other support.

e. Support development of the Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) to become an Ivy League college for urban Indians.

6. Employment

a. Create a jobs network with urban Indian businesses.

b. Support monthly co-op for urban Indians to sell goods, arts, crafts, food, crops, etc.

7. Families

a. Use schools urban Indian students attend to communicate with parents and inform them of available resources and to increase parental involvement.

b. Create a peer-to-peer family support program with urban Indian families.

c. Assist with sponsorship for urban Indian youth to attend camps, participate in sport and non-sport leagues and activities.

d. Create a mentoring program run by adult urban Indians for Indian youth released from long-term incarceration and living in the City.

e. Conduct cultural education classes and activities aimed at teaching cultural values, learning culture-based arts, music, among others to urban Indians in all age categories.

f. Help to establish elder councils and youth councils that can work collaboratively on urban Indian needs and wants.

8. Health & Social Services

a. Hire qualified urban Indian professionals to manage programs specifically for the urban Indian population.

b. Develop and implement strategies to address management concerns at AIC.

c. Fund programs specifically addressing substance abuse, behavioral health and family violence problems, including options for inpatient treatment.

d. Develop and implement strategies to make current programs and treatment more culturally relevant. This includes hiring Native Americans to provide needed services in healthcare, elder care, and social services.

e. Restore social services component at AIC. This will help to have a central resource center for urban Indians to find and obtain resources.