

# City of Mississauga

# Corporate Report



Date: October 14, 2021

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Jodi Robillos, Acting Commissioner of Community Services

Originator's files:

Meeting date:  
November 10, 2021

## Subject

**City of Mississauga Annual Reconciliation Report and Land Acknowledgement renewal**

## Recommendation

1. That the Corporate Report entitled "City of Mississauga Annual Truth and Reconciliation Report and Land Acknowledgement Renewal" dated October 14, 2021 from the Acting Commissioner of Community Services be approved, and that the report be filed with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.
2. That the City of Mississauga Adopt the renewed Land Acknowledgement and Statement of Reconciliation and that Council mandate its use for all Standing and Advisory Committee meetings.
3. That Council and City of Mississauga recognize the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and implement any changes from this recognition in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

## Executive Summary

- In 2015, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada published 94 Calls to Action to forward Reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.
- Thirteen of these Calls to Action are directed at all Municipal Governments across Canada, and nine of these are actionable by the City.
- One Call to Action involves the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which staff recommend that the City recognizes.
- The City is currently taking action on all nine, and taking further action on an additional four Calls to Action.

Council	2021/10/14	2
---------	------------	---

- In 2017, The City of Mississauga formally adopted an Indigenous Land Statement. Staff recommend renewing this statement as a Land Acknowledgement and Reconciliation Statement.

## Background

The City of Mississauga formally created the Indigenous Relations Unit within the Culture Division in 2020. The mandate of the unit is to provide advice and guidance to staff and Council on matters pertaining to work with our Indigenous Treaty partners and residents. Indigenous Relations brought forward two reports to Council in November, 2020, which recommended a renewal of the City's relationship with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation by raising their flag in Council Chambers and amending the naming of the City bylaw to recognize the Ojibwe language from which it originated.

The reports further documented the actions the City was taking in relation to the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to further strengthen our relationship with the Peel Indigenous Network and Friendship Centres in Ontario. The report also recommended an annual reconciliation report be brought to Council, prior to submission to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

The City of Mississauga has been using an Indigenous Land Statement in advance of Council meetings since 2017. This statement acknowledged the lands within which the City of Mississauga is located with regards to Treaty partners and traditional territory.

## Comments

Recent events have brought to light truths regarding the ongoing nature, and history, of Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples. The tragic documentation of unmarked burials at multiple Residential Schools, combined with ongoing boil water advisories and the legal action through appeals against decisions for survivors have raised the challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples to a national level. The City of Mississauga remains committed to Truth and Reconciliation and we continue to renew our relationship with our Treaty Partners.

The City has taken several notable actions over the past year in its efforts to renew and strengthen our relationships with Indigenous communities and residents. The City has entered into an agreement with the Peel Indigenous Network to provide them office and programming space within Clarke Hall, and likewise barrier-free access was provided for the Water Gathering Ceremony, hosted by Akina Maagaye Gammik Lodge in Erindale Park. Ensuring that Indigenous Peoples can access public spaces freely within the City works to uphold their Treaty Rights.

The City has further engaged in multiple projects to make our public spaces Indigenous in nature, integrating Indigenous feedback, design, and knowledge into multiple park projects,

Council	2021/10/14	3
---------	------------	---

such as the Marina and West Memorial Park redevelopment, the Credit Meadows park development and the Lakeview parklands strategy. The City continues to engage with our Treaty and traditional territory partners on all City-led land development projects.

City Staff programmed two days of significance; National Indigenous Peoples Day and the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation; the former incorporating content provided by the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the latter focusing on raising awareness and education, focusing on the truths which have come into focus this past year. Both events had a combined engagement of approximately 10,000 individuals through onsite programming, online and social media content.

The City has partnered with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to be a municipal partner in the Moccasin Identifier project, a place making initiative created by former Chief Carolyn King which seeks to return erased Indigenous footprints within urbanized area. The Moccasin Identifier was showcased at both National Indigenous Peoples Day and the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation within Celebration Square. City representation have been offered a place within the Steering Committee for this Indigenous project.

The City continues to provide learning opportunities to our staff to raise cultural awareness. These opportunities include two Indigenous speakers; Tanya Talaga and Niigaan Sinclair, as well two Equity Alerts and an Indigenous Learning Toolkit. Human Resources, Strategic Communications & Initiatives and the Culture Division have been working with NVision Insight Group from Ottawa, an organization where 60% of employees are Indigenous, to purchase a series of eLearning modules on the History of Indigenous Peoples. A more comprehensive report regarding this mandatory learning will be brought forward to the LT in 2022.

Reconciliation affects all divisions within the City, and efforts have been demonstrated in almost every division to ensure that the City continues to include Indigenous perspectives, considerations and comments into our collective work as a municipality. Mayor and Council have demonstrated a commitment to reconciliation, passing a resolution in June of this year to ask the Federal government to cease the appeals against the Human Rights Tribunal decision to award support to survivors of Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop. This resolution was sent to the Federal Government and to all municipalities across Canada, with several other municipalities taking up the call and responding in kind.

In light of the increased awareness of the challenges facing Indigenous Peoples, staff recommend renewing the Land Acknowledgement and combining it with a Statement of Reconciliation (Appendix 1). The Land Acknowledgement is a refresh on the existing Indigenous Land Statement which was first used in 2017. The intent of these statements are to be renewed periodically so they do not become static and performative. Staff also recommend extending their use to all Standing and Advisory committee meetings. The renewed acknowledgment and statement will also be published on the City website for use by residents, along with support guidance on their appropriate use.

Finally, there are nine Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which apply to municipalities such as the City of Mississauga. The City is taking action on all nine, as well as an additional four (Appendix 2). Staff recommend that the City formally recognizes the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), in line with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* which received royal assent earlier this year. It is expected that the current Duty to Consult and Engagement framework currently in place under Federal and Provincial legislation may change as a result of the above *Act*. More details will be made available within a three-year timeline as set out in the above *Act*.

## Engagement and Consultation

The wording on the Land Acknowledgement was completed in Consultation with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Six Nations of the Grand River.

## Financial Impact

There is no financial impact for adopting the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action in this report as funds for the initiatives have already been approved in the operational budgets of various departments across the City.

## Conclusion

The City of Mississauga continues to work towards reconciliation. The process of reconciliation involves reconsidering many of the standard practices which govern municipal processes and hearing truths which are uncomfortable and challenging. It is in taking these actions that the City continues to honour and respect the Treaties which were signed for the land, and the Indigenous Peoples who have lived here since time immemorial.

## Attachments

- Appendix 1: Renewed Land Acknowledgment and Statement of Reconciliation
- Appendix 2: Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and City of Mississauga's responding Actions.



Jodi Robillos, Acting Commissioner of Community Services

Prepared by: John Dunlop, Manager of Indigenous Relations and Heritage Planning