

Urban Aboriginal Framework

Date:	October 19, 2012
To:	Executive Committee
From:	City Manager's Office
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report responds to City Council's decision to develop an Urban Aboriginal Framework (UAF) for Toronto, in consultation with the Aboriginal Affairs committee of Toronto. The UAF provides a guiding framework that brings together community aspirations and City responsibilities. This framework has been developed in two phases. The first phase was the Statement of Commitment which was adopted by City Council in July 2010. This report outlines the components of the second phase Action Plan in support of fulfilling the Statement of Commitment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council receive this report for information.

Equity Impact Statement

The development of an Urban Aboriginal Framework, in consultation with the Aboriginal Affairs committee, affirms Toronto City Council's commitment to the principle of Aboriginal self-determination and to establish mechanisms for full civic participation by all residents in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the City.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts as a result of receipt of this report.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

In July of 2010 Toronto City Council adopted the report Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities in Toronto – Towards a Framework for Urban Aboriginal Relations in Toronto. In that report it was recommended that an action plan be developed in consultation with the Aboriginal Affairs committee to give effect to the commitments contained in the report.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2010.EX45.5>

As a component of the Action Plan and in fulfillment of two of the commitments in the Statement of Commitment, on July, 2012 Council adopted two reports:

Toronto Public Service (TPS) Education Strategy on Aboriginal History and Culture

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.EX21.15>

and Aboriginal Representation on Agencies and Corporations.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.EX21.14>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

According to Census data the Aboriginal population in Toronto is rapidly growing, with an increase of almost 20% since 2001. The 2006 Census data showed that compared to non-Aboriginal residents, the Aboriginal population is younger and has higher unemployment rate, a lower annual income, and a greater likelihood of a single-parent house-hold.

Aboriginal Peoples hold a unique legal and constitutional position in Canada. This is reflected in section 35 of the Constitution of 1982. The City of Toronto has affirmed this unique position of Aboriginal peoples in its vision statement on Access, Equity and Diversity. "The City recognizes the unique status and cultural diversity of the Aboriginal communities and their right to self-determination." Most recently the City reaffirmed this position in adopting the Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities in Toronto on July 2010. The Statement acknowledges the need to develop an Urban Aboriginal Framework and that:

... Aboriginal Communities have the knowledge and experience to work with the City to develop strategies for assisting Aboriginal issues and expanding Aboriginal opportunities. The City understands the value in initiatives that are both led and delivered by Aboriginal people...The City commits to the development of an action plan in partnership with Aboriginal communities in Toronto.

In acknowledgement of the above, Toronto City Council re-established the Aboriginal Affairs Committee in 2011. This committee acts as a conduit to the Aboriginal community infrastructure and is assisting the City in achieving its commitments to the Aboriginal community. The committee is leading the development and implementation of the Action Plan.

COMMENT

The Statement of Commitment identifies seven (7) distinct goals/commitments to be fulfilled as part of the Urban Aboriginal Framework:

- The City commits to creating training opportunities for the Toronto Public Service to learn about the history and its current day impacts from Aboriginal Elders and other Aboriginal partners. The City also commits to working with Aboriginal communities to improve public awareness of Aboriginal life in Toronto.
- The City commits, when working with the Aboriginal communities in Toronto, to learn about the elements of an Aboriginal holistic approach from its Aboriginal partners. The City further commits to supporting this approach in the belief that this will provide the greatest benefit to the community being served.
- The City commits to working with Aboriginal partners to explore ways to strengthen the capacity of Aboriginal organizations and associations to plan, lead and deliver initiatives for local Aboriginal communities.
- The City also commits to engaging Aboriginal communities in the City's decision making process, to removing barriers to civic participation and to increasing the representation and role of Aboriginal people on municipal boards and committees.
- The City of Toronto commits to implement employment practices that ensure that opportunities for employment are accessible to Aboriginal people and increases the number of Aboriginal employees at all occupational levels.
- The City of Toronto commits to working formally and informally with all orders of government and other municipalities, institutions and community organizations to continue exploring promising practices and opportunities for collaboration on Aboriginal initiatives and to promote the interests of Aboriginal people in Toronto, as defined by the Aboriginal communities.
- The City of Toronto commits to the development of an action plan in partnership with Aboriginal communities in Toronto. The City of Toronto also commits to ensuring an accountability process is established in order to measure the success of the Statement of Commitment.

Under the guidance of the Aboriginal Affairs Committee, the second phase of the Urban Aboriginal Framework has identified several key components of an Action Plan that need to be implemented in order to fulfill City's Commitment:

1. Organization Development and Learning are preparing a strategy to provide education opportunities for the Toronto Public Service regarding the culture and history of Aboriginal peoples living in Toronto, and the impact of their historical experience on their lives today. This strategy is linked to the first commitment

- which addresses training opportunities for the Toronto Public Service to learn about Aboriginal history and its current day impacts from Aboriginal Elders and other Aboriginal partners and to improve public awareness of Aboriginal life. To be completed and in place by the end of 2013.
2. The Aboriginal Affairs committee is developing a survey form addressing the issue of capacity. This survey will be delivered to the various Aboriginal agencies about what is needed to build the capacity of the Aboriginal community and the role of the City in assisting to build that capacity. This initiative is related to the commitment number three that is addressing ways to strengthen the capacity of Aboriginal organizations. To be completed by June of 2013.
 3. The Office of Equity, Diversity and Human Rights and the Governance Structure & Corporate Performance have developed an approach to identify the barriers to civic participation for Aboriginal Peoples and to find ways to increase the representation of Aboriginal Peoples on the City of Toronto's Agencies and Corporations. An initial meeting has been held with the Aboriginal Affairs committee to discuss barriers and to develop strategies on improving representation. This initiative is linked to commitment number four to engage Aboriginal communities in the City's decision making process, to removing barriers to civic participation and to increasing the representation and role of Aboriginal people on municipal boards and committees. Work on this initiative will be carried out in 2013 preparing for 2015 call for applications to Agencies and Corporations.
 4. To address the remaining commitments, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Human Rights is developing a corporate wide inventory of existing programs being delivered at the TPS that serve the Aboriginal community. This inventory will provide an opportunity to bench mark service delivery to the Aboriginal community and a process to ensure accountability. This will be completed by the end of 2012
 5. The Office of Equity, Diversity and Human Rights will match these programs with the listed commitments by the end of 2012. This will provide an overview of the work currently being carried out by the City of Toronto. Using this data and working with the Aboriginal Affairs committee and the Aboriginal community, EDHR will identify gaps in services as well as opportunities to develop more complementary services. This will be ongoing work through 2013 and 2014.
 6. The Office of Equity, Diversity and Human Rights will report annually on the progress in fulfilling the Statement of Commitment.

Conclusion

This report provides the next phase of the Urban Aboriginal Framework and demonstrates the City of Toronto's commitment to supporting the Aboriginal right to self-determination and unique constitutional status by working inclusively with Aboriginal Affairs committee and communities to achieve equitable outcomes for Aboriginal people in their day to day lives.

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SIGNATURE

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