



## Establishment of an Indigenous Affairs Office at the City of Toronto

**Date:** October 27, 2017  
**To:** Aboriginal Affairs Committee  
**From:** City Manager  
**Wards:** All

### SUMMARY

---

The City of Toronto will establish an Indigenous Affairs Office within the City Manager's Office. The Indigenous Affairs Office will report directly to the City Manager, with an administrative reporting relationship to the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights for the purposes of budget, timekeeping and administrative support. In this report, the term 'Indigenous' is used to refer to the First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities.

A survey of City divisions indicates several are engaged in initiatives related to Indigenous affairs and a number have staff positions that are assigned to related portfolios. While the City remains committed to embedding responsibility for Indigenous priorities within divisions, the City recognizes the need for a centralized Indigenous Affairs Office in the City Manager's Office to, among other things:

- strengthen the City's relationship with Indigenous communities
- develop and implement a reconciliation framework/strategy for the City
- support City divisions in the development and implementation of reconciliation initiatives and provision of subject matter expertise, including to support conversations with other orders of government
- assist in the development of Indigenous cultural competency training and related education for the Toronto Public Service
- support the Aboriginal Affairs Committee
- track and report on the City's progress in responding to the eight Truth and Reconciliation Priority Calls to Action adopted by the City
- ensure that the City's work with Indigenous communities is in accordance with the City's Statement of Commitment to the Aboriginal Communities of Toronto
- promote Indigenous civic participation and inclusion in the City's decision making processes
- support Indigenous cultural events at the City
- secure funding for Indigenous related initiatives

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

The City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council express its support for establishing an Indigenous Affairs Office within the City Manager's Office at the City of Toronto.
2. City Council refer the new and enhanced request of \$0.480 million gross and net for the addition of 4.0 positions to staff the Indigenous Affairs Office and \$0.040 million gross and net to retain an external consultant, for a total of \$0.520 million gross and net, included in the City Manager's Office 2018 Operating Budget Submission for consideration as part of the 2018 Budget process.
3. City Council request the City Manager to submit funding applications, as appropriate, to federal and provincial governments, to non-profit organizations and to private sector organizations to support the establishment and work of the Indigenous Affairs Office, and authorize the City Manager to enter into such agreements in a form satisfactory to the City Manager and City Solicitor.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

---

There will be five staff positions in the Indigenous Affairs Office. The existing Indigenous Affairs consultant position within the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights division will be reassigned to the Indigenous Affairs Office. In addition a total of \$0.520 million gross and net is included in the City Manager's Office 2018 Operating Budget Submission for four (4) new positions (manager, administrative assistant, Indigenous Affairs consultant and youth intern) and a one-time external consultant expense.

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

## **DECISION HISTORY**

---

At its meeting of July 4, 5, 6 and 7, 2017, Toronto City Council directed the City Manager to: consult with the New Credit First Nation, the Haudenosaunee and Huron-Wendat First Nations, the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council and other relevant stakeholders, and report on the feasibility of establishing a new Aboriginal Office, an organizational structure, a mandate, financial implications and a work plan for implementation; report an all aboriginal services and resources, including staff, currently provided by City of Toronto divisions, agencies and corporations; and seek support from the federal and provincial governments for City of Toronto Aboriginal services and the establishment of an Aboriginal office.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX26.25>

## COMMENTS

---

In July 2017, the City of Toronto retained the services of Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC) to assist in responding to the direction from City Council. TASSC was retained to identify relevant stakeholders for consultation, work with the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights division to conduct consultation and conduct research and a jurisdictional scan of best practices.

Over the course of the summer, TASSC met individually with various Indigenous leaders. The City is grateful to the following Indigenous leaders, Elders and leaders of Indigenous organizations for their participation in the consultation:

- Chief Stacy LaForme (Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation)
- Chief Ava Hill (Six Nations of the Grand River)
- Frances Sanderson, Executive Director, Nishnawbe Homes
- Steve Teekens, Executive Director, Na Me Res (Native Mens' Residence)
- Todd Ross, Co-Chair, Toronto York Métis Council
- Nancy Martin, Executive Director, Miziwe Biik Employment and Training
- Kenn Richard, Executive Director, Native Child and Family Services Toronto
- Tanya Senk, Centrally Assigned Principal Indigenous Education, Toronto District School Board
- Jonathan Hamilton, Director, Indigenous Initiatives, Office of VP & Provost, University of Toronto
- Larry Frost, Executive Director, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
- Sarah Midanik, Executive Director, Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto

Appendix A contains the report from TASSC on the outcome of the consultations, their analysis and the results of the jurisdictional scan. The report from TASSC identifies a number of gaps in the City's current structure and in Indigenous leaders' perceptions of the City's commitment to Indigenous priorities. Their findings include:

- the absence of a locus of control on Indigenous issues within the City
- a low level of trust between the Indigenous community and the City
- the lack of an authentic relationship between the City and the Indigenous community
- the perception that Indigenous priorities have a low level of urgency within the City
- that there has been insufficient progress made on Indigenous priorities
- four municipalities in Canada have Indigenous relations offices (Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Hamilton) and three of those offices have a higher number of staff than the one Aboriginal Affairs Consultant position the City currently has

The report also notes that the City of Calgary has determined that one staff person devoted to Indigenous affairs is inadequate and has committed to establishing an Indigenous Relations Office within the City.

The comparison of the City's resourcing level with other Canadian municipalities does not consider the total number of City of Toronto employees who work on Indigenous portfolios. The report notes that, "The jurisdictional scan did not analyze the Indigenous

resources allocated within City divisions. It is possible that cities with an Indigenous Office have limited Indigenous resources allocated within City divisions. It is possible that the City of Toronto has underinvested in its 'Indigenous office' but instead placed the majority of its indigenous resources within City divisions. It is possible that the City of Toronto's Indigenous investment is greater than cities with an Indigenous Office when indigenous investments allocated to City divisions is included."

TASSC's report contains 17 recommendations and exploratory considerations that will be reviewed and assessed upon the establishment of the Indigenous Affairs Office. Staff will report back to the Aboriginal Affairs Committee on the outcome of this review.

Appendix B contains a chart summarizing the results of the City of Toronto's survey of City divisions and agencies. The results of the survey indicates that there are approximately 22 staff at the City who oversee Indigenous portfolios. Some of these staff are dedicated to Indigenous portfolios while others are their division's leads on Indigenous issues. In addition, several divisions have many staff who engage in service delivery to Indigenous communities or who are involved in Indigenous related programming.

The City remains committed to embedding resources within divisions to provide the highest level of support and services to Toronto's communities and to ensure that the service delivery model reflects their needs. This approach has enabled progress on a number of Indigenous initiatives including:

- development of a comprehensive Toronto Indigenous Health Strategy coordinated and supported by Toronto Public Health and the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network
- continuing work on developing an Indigenous place making initiative by Parks, Forestry and Recreation
- delivering indigenous cultural competency education in Children's Services and Shelter, Support and Housing Administration

The City of Toronto is also in the process of providing full-day Indigenous cultural competency training to its extended senior management team.

### **Establishment of an Indigenous Affairs Office**

The City of Toronto recognizes the need for more focused and coordinated leadership on Indigenous affairs. This was a key finding of TASSC. To achieve this, the City of Toronto will establish an Indigenous Affairs Office within the City Manager's Office, as many cities across Canada have already done.

An Indigenous Affairs Office will develop and implement a reconciliation framework/strategy for the City; support divisional initiatives on Indigenous affairs; allow for the development and implementation of inter-divisional initiatives; promote the development of corporate wide initiatives; support the roll out of Indigenous cultural competency training; develop best practices to guide divisions and the City in its relationship building efforts with Indigenous communities; and strengthen the City's relationship with Indigenous communities.

The Indigenous Affairs Office will report directly to the City Manager, with an administrative reporting relationship to the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights for the purposes of budget, timekeeping and administrative support. The Indigenous Affairs Office will be comprised of five (5) staff positions: manager, 2 Indigenous Affairs consultants, administrative assistant and a youth intern. The youth intern position will provide for a one-year employment opportunity for an Indigenous youth. Every year, a new youth intern will be hired.

An external consultant will be retained on a one-time basis to assist the City Manager in the development of a strategic plan, a work plan and an engagement plan for the new Indigenous Affairs Office.

City staff will identify potential sources of funding for the Indigenous Affairs Office as well as funding for Indigenous related initiatives, programs and services at the City. This report also seeks Council approval for the City Manager to submit funding applications, as appropriate, to federal and provincial governments, to non-profit organizations and to private sector organizations to support the establishment and work of the Indigenous Affairs Office.

## **CONTACT**

---

Omo Akintan  
Acting Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights  
416-392-8703  
Omo.Akintan@toronto.ca

## **SIGNATURE**

---

Peter Wallace  
City Manager

## **ATTACHMENTS**

---

Appendix A: Report from Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC)  
Appendix B: City of Toronto Resources Directed to Indigenous Programs or Services