



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

**Statement of Commitment to the Aboriginal
Communities of Toronto – Annual Update 2015**

Date:	November 13, 2015
To:	Executive Committee
From:	City Manager
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report responds to City Council's decision on July 6, 2010 to adopt the Statement of Commitment to the Aboriginal Communities of Toronto – Towards a Framework for Urban Aboriginal Relations in Toronto. Key elements of an Action Plan to implement the Statement of Commitment that formed part of a staff report on the Urban Aboriginal Framework were approved by Council on November 27, 2012.

One of the main tasks of the Aboriginal Affairs Committee of Toronto is to oversee the implementation of the Statement of Commitment. The Aboriginal Affairs Committee prioritized three Commitments from the Statement for implementation. The three Commitments relate to education of the Toronto Public Service on Aboriginal culture and history, increasing Aboriginal representation on City agencies and corporations and increasing the numbers of Aboriginal employees at all levels at the City of Toronto. The Equity, Diversity and Human Rights (EDHR) Division, in partnership with Human Resources and other City divisions, is responsible for implementing the three Commitments.

This report meets the accountability requirements of the Statement of Commitment which ask for annual progress updates to both City Council and the Aboriginal Affairs Committee. It highlights the actions taken by the City on the three Commitments identified above and the work that lies ahead.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council receive this report for information.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts to this report.

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

Equity Impact Statement

The implementation of the Statement of Commitment, 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.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 6, 2010, Toronto City Council adopted the report Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities in Toronto – Towards a Framework for Urban Aboriginal Relations in Toronto. That report recommended that an Action Plan be developed in consultation with the Aboriginal Affairs committee to implement the commitments contained in the report.

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

On July 11, 2012, a Toronto Public Service (TPS) Education Strategy on Aboriginal History and Culture was adopted by Council. Council also adopted the Report on Aboriginal representation on Agencies and Corporations.

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

On November 27, 2012, City Council adopted the report entitled Report from the City Manager on Urban Aboriginal Framework that would require EDHR to report annually on the progress in fulfilling the Statement of Commitment to the Aboriginal Communities of Toronto.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.EX24.5>

On June 11, 2013, Council adopted a motion to create an Aboriginal Employment Strategy and in 2014 the Aboriginal Employment Strategy was adopted by Council.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.MM36.11>

On December 16, 2013, City Council adopted the report entitled Urban Aboriginal Framework (UAF). This report provides the second update on the implementation progress of the UAF.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.EX36.5>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

According to the 2011 Census, off-reserve Aboriginal people constitute the fastest growing segment of Canadian society. In 2011, 56% of Aboriginal people lived in urban areas, up from 49% in 1996. The cities with the largest Aboriginal populations in 2011 were Winnipeg (78,420), Edmonton (61,765), Vancouver (52,375), Toronto (36,995), Calgary (33,370), Ottawa-Gatineau (30,570), Montreal (26,280), Saskatoon (23,895), and Regina (19,785).

According to 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) data, the Aboriginal population is rapidly growing, with an increase of almost 20% since 2006 to 2011. The 2011 NHS data showed that, compared to non-Aboriginal residents, the Aboriginal population is younger and has a higher unemployment rate, a lower annual income, and a greater likelihood of a single-parent household.

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." The City reaffirmed this position in adopting the Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities of Toronto on July 6, 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 on February 10, 2015. This Committee acts as a conduit to the Aboriginal community infrastructure and is advising the City on implementing the Commitments to the Aboriginal communities.

COMMENTS

In fulfilling the Statement of Commitment to the Aboriginal Communities of Toronto, several key components of an Action Plan were identified at the November 27, 2012 City Council meeting:

- Developing a strategy to provide educational opportunities for the TPS on the history and culture of Aboriginal Peoples living in Toronto, and the impact of their historical experience on their lives today.
- Providing training opportunities for the TPS 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.
- Identifying and removing barriers to civic participation and to increasing the representation and role of Aboriginal people on municipal boards and committees.
- Identifying existing programs at the City that serve Aboriginal communities.
- Identifying gaps in services as well as opportunities to develop more complementary services.
- EDHR to report annually on the progress in implementing the Statement of Commitment.

The Aboriginal Affairs Committee prioritized three Commitments for implementation:

1. Creating training opportunities for the TPS on Aboriginal history and culture (Aboriginal Education Strategy)
2. Engaging Aboriginal communities in the decision-making processes at the City (Aboriginal Representation on Agencies and Corporations)
3. Increasing the number of Aboriginal employees at all levels of the City (Aboriginal Employment Strategy).

EDHR, with input from the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee, will develop a plan to implement the remaining Commitments.

Progress Update on Statement of Commitment

The City is developing corporate key performance indicators and measures for all equity, diversity and human rights work. This will enable the City to evaluate the success of corporate efforts in embedding equity, diversity and human rights considerations into the City's business and to measure the effectiveness of such key initiatives as the Statement of Commitment.

1. Aboriginal Education Strategy

"The City commits to creating training opportunities for the TPS 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." (Statement of Commitment)

The Aboriginal Education Strategy is being implemented by EDHR and the Human Resources (HR) Division. There is ongoing education of the TPS on Aboriginal Issues. Key educational activities are listed below:

- The City of Toronto supports public awareness of Aboriginal life through the annual acknowledgement of National Aboriginal Day (NAD), June 21, by hosting a flag raising and a sunrise ceremony and planning for June 21 events at Nathan Phillips Square.
- National Aboriginal Day has been proclaimed by the Mayor of Toronto for the past 20 years.
- During June, which is Aboriginal History Month, event information is publicized through Monday Morning News.
- The City also supports the Métis community by recognizing and honouring Louis Riel Day every November 16th. This support is demonstrated by a flag-raising ceremony and a proclamation.
- The City of Toronto now acknowledges the Aboriginal territory we are on at the beginning of every City Council meeting.
- EDHR and Human Resources Division jointly organized an Equity Summit in November 2014 on Aboriginal Initiatives for City staff. This program included a keynote presentation by Barbara Hall, who is an honorary witness for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Six City divisions presented on the work they currently do with Aboriginal communities. Parks Forestry & Recreation, Social Development Finance & Administration, Economic Development & Culture (Museum and Heritage Services), Toronto Public Health, Children's Services and Shelter, Support, Housing & Administration were the panelists.
- The panelists on Aboriginal Initiatives at the November 2014 Equity Summit also spoke about their work at a City Management Onboarding session in May 2015.
- In 2015, Toronto Urban Fellows attended an educational session at Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, on the work of the agency and a presentation from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. A seminar on Aboriginal culture and history will become part of the education of every new Urban Fellow cohort.
- Toronto Public Health continues to provide information and education to their staff on cultural competency in working with Aboriginal communities.
- Museums and Heritage Services has incorporated Aboriginal history and culture into their events planning. They recently hosted an Indigenous mural project at Fort York called Niinwin-Dabaadjmowin – We are talking, and Dibaajimowin Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and Men.
- Fort York hosted the Aboriginal Pavilion during the 2015 Pan Am Games.
- EDHR provided advice and consultation to the Aboriginal Leadership Partners of the Pan Am/Para Pan Am Games in 2015.
- EDHR provided support to Mackenzie House's initiative for hosting an exhibit entitled Walking Together - An exhibition inspired by the poignant stories of loss and courage shared by survivors of the Mohawk Institute, a residential school from 1831 to 1969.

- Currently, a needs assessment is underway to begin the process of developing a corporate training curriculum for City staff on Aboriginal history and culture.

2. Aboriginal Representation on Agencies and Corporations

"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."
(Statement of Commitment)

On November 23, 2011, the City Manager's Office reported that 1,773 applicants had applied for City board opportunities in the first year of that term. While other board recruitments were conducted later in the term, the majority of the City's public appointment opportunities were filled at the time of reporting. Of these applicants, 14 people identified as being Aboriginal. None of the 14 was appointed.

In the current term of Council, City staff have been using various methods to broadcast public appointment opportunities. The Public Appointments Secretariat in the City Clerk's Office reported that, at the time of writing of this report, 3,913 people had applied for City board opportunities. Of that total, 3,500 had completed the voluntary diversity survey which is attached to every application. This represents approximately an 89% response rate for applicants. Of these applicants, 46 identified as being Aboriginal. This represents approximately five times as many Aboriginal applicants compared to the last term of Council. Currently, one public appointee has identified as being Aboriginal. The majority of the City's public appointment opportunities will be filled by the end of 2015, though a number of boards will be considering new public members in late 2016.

EDHR will continue to partner with the Public Appointments Secretariat in the City Clerk's Office to inform Aboriginal communities about these opportunities and to build their capacity to participate in the City's decision-making processes.

3. Aboriginal Employment Strategy

"The City of Toronto commits to implementing employment practices that ensure that opportunities for employment are accessible to Aboriginal people and increases the number of Aboriginal employees at all occupational levels." (Statement of Commitment)

The Aboriginal Employment Strategy, led by Human Resources (HR) Division at the City, focuses on three areas: Outreach, Employment and Education. HR in partnership with EDHR created an Aboriginal Employment Strategy Implementation Team and developed a work plan to move forward in these areas. The Implementation team meets every six weeks to review progress.

The Implementation Team has improved outreach by making more targeted contacts with Aboriginal communities, by using social media and by attending career fairs and job fairs within these communities. Members of the Team attended five career and job events in 2015. The Implementation Team has also taken a proactive approach to informing

Aboriginal communities about job opportunities available at the City of Toronto. They have created an email list to send out notifications of openings at all levels of the City. The Implementation Team is developing a communications strategy the Strategic Communications Division to publicize the Aboriginal Employment Strategy throughout the TPS. Further, Implementation Team members have presented the Aboriginal Employment Strategy to recruitment staff at the Human Resources Division.

The Implementation Team partners with Aboriginal agencies such as Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training and provides information on opportunities at the City in order that the clients of the agencies can be job ready. The Implementation Team also partners with Toronto Employment and Social Services in their Annual Aboriginal Networking session to reach out to Aboriginal youth who are searching for career opportunities.

In the area of employment, the Implementation Team is exploring ways to allow Aboriginal applicants to self-identify, confidentially, on application forms. The Implementation Team is scoping the creation of special programs (as per the Ontario Human Rights Code) to increase Aboriginal employment and representation within the Toronto Public Service.

The Implementation Team will use baseline data from the Count Yourself In: Workforce Survey to build its work on the Aboriginal Employment Strategy towards the 2018 goal.

Further Action

While there has been progress on the Statement of Commitment, the City's efforts on these three Commitments continue. The City will focus specifically on the following actions:

1. Aboriginal Education Strategy

- Completing a training needs assessment to ensure that the most appropriate corporate course on Aboriginal history and culture is developed for the TPS.
- Creating a list of appropriate vendors to provide training.
- Developing an RFP for vendors.
- Delivering an Aboriginal History and Culture course to the TPS.
- Continuing with regular events for National Aboriginal Day, Aboriginal History Month and for Louis Riel Day.
- EDHR with HR will create a Community of Practice to support and encourage City divisions that are currently working with Aboriginal communities to share best practices.

2. Aboriginal Representation on Agencies and Corporations

- Continue to outreach to the Aboriginal communities to ensure that they are aware of the opportunities that exist to be part of the decision making at the City of Toronto.

- Participate with Public Appointments in developing information sessions regarding the work of the various Agencies and Corporations.

3. Aboriginal Employment Strategy

- The Implementation Team will continue to build relationships with Aboriginal communities for more effective recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees.
- The Team will develop a confidential method for self-identification on application forms to monitor the success of the City's outreach efforts and to track the numbers of Aboriginal people hired by the City.
- The Team will consult with the Ontario Human Rights Commission about establishing a Special Program for Aboriginal recruitment.
- The Count Yourself In: Workforce Survey data results will be used to determine the number of Aboriginal employees at the City of Toronto and their occupational distribution across the organization, compared to existing labour market availability.

New Actions

- In 2016, EDHR with input from the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee will develop a plan to take action to fulfill the remaining commitments by 2018.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released their Calls to Action report in June 2015. EDHR will review the Calls to Action report and, with input from the Aboriginal Affairs Committee, will list the actions that apply to municipalities and develop an implementation plan.

CONTACT

Uzma Shakir
Director
Equity, Diversity and Human Rights
Phone: 416-392-1108
Email: ushakir@toronto.ca

Mae Maracle
Consultant Diversity
Management/Community Engagement
Phone: 416-392-5583
Email: mmaracle@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Peter Wallace
City Manager

APPENDIX A

City of Toronto Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities in Toronto

Building Strong Relationships, Achieving Equitable Outcomes

The City of Toronto recognizes and respects the unique status and cultural diversity among the Aboriginal communities of Toronto. The City of Toronto continues its commitment to supporting the Aboriginal right to self-determination by working inclusively with Aboriginal communities in Toronto to achieve equitable outcomes for Aboriginal people within their communities and their day to day lives.

Recognize:

The City of Toronto recognizes the inherent rights of Aboriginal people provided by the Canadian Constitution. The City acknowledges that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of the land now known as the City of Toronto and that this area holds historical significance where diverse Aboriginal nations came together to exchange goods and as a sacred place for cultural practices. The City of Toronto values its Aboriginal history and the meaningful contributions of Aboriginal people to the development and the prosperity of Toronto.

The City of Toronto recognizes the rich diversity that exists within Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal people are First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. The City understands that the term Aboriginal includes diverse communities and cultures that originate from all areas across Canada as well as being indigenous to Toronto. Aboriginal people are part of the social fabric of the city and live in neighbourhoods throughout Toronto.

The City of Toronto understands that many Aboriginal people living in Toronto are affected by historical and contemporary injustices which continue to have profound impacts on most, if not all, aspects of life. The City acknowledges that reconnecting with, maintaining, and celebrating a strong sense of Aboriginal identity, through cultural expression, retention of language, spiritual practice, and/or community relations, is fundamental to the well-being of many Aboriginal communities.

The City of Toronto respects the strength and capacity of organizations that exists within Aboriginal communities in Toronto and acknowledges that this has fostered positive change for Aboriginal people living in Toronto

Listen, Learn, Share, Promote:

The City of Toronto acknowledges that an understanding of the Aboriginal history of the city is an important element in creating the foundation for a strong working relationship with Aboriginal communities and in the collaborative development of successful

programs and policies. The City of Toronto also understands that public reflection and celebration of Aboriginal cultures and life are important elements of achieving the City's vision of access, equity and human rights – a vision that seeks to achieve a City that is inclusive for all Torontonians.

Commitment:

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.

Commitment:

The City also commits to working with Aboriginal communities to improve public awareness of Aboriginal life in Toronto.

The City of Toronto acknowledges that Aboriginal approaches to healing, growth, and mutual understanding are often holistic in nature, and that these approaches may differ from non-Aboriginal methods. The City understands that Aboriginal people are well served when services and programs are culturally appropriate. The City also understands that the programs and practices of Aboriginal organizations are culturally based.

Commitment:

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.

Partner and Engage:

The City of Toronto acknowledges that Aboriginal communities have the knowledge and experience to work with the City to develop strategies for addressing Aboriginal issues and expanding Aboriginal opportunities. The City also understands the value in initiatives that are both led and delivered by Aboriginal people.

Commitment:

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 values diversity and equity within the Toronto Public Service and is committed to the achievement of its Employment Equity Policy so that the workforce represents the population that it serves.

Commitment:

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 recognizes that collaborative and seamless approaches to service delivery from all orders of government, institutions and community organizations are important for Aboriginal communities.

Commitment:

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.

TOWARDS AN ACTION PLAN

The City of Toronto will demonstrate through its actions the value it places on contributions made by Aboriginal people and its belief that a diverse, inclusive, and equitable Toronto is a strong Toronto. The City believes that this *Statement of Commitment* will result in meaningful advancement of equitable opportunities for Aboriginal people when actions are taken and resources are allocated.

Commitment:

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*.