

Support for Walk for Reconciliation

Date: February 7, 2017

To: Aboriginal Affairs Committee

From: General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, and Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights

Wards: All

SUMMARY

In September 2017, at least 50,000 participants are expected to take part in the Walk for Reconciliation in Toronto - an inclusive special event celebrating Canadians' shared commitment to transform and renew relationships among Indigenous peoples and all communities across the country. Organized by Reconciliation Canada, an Indigenous-led charitable organization, the event will consist of a 4-kilometre walk through Toronto's downtown core, and will also feature an opening ceremony, keynote addresses, cultural performances, a food market, community partner activations, and more.

The Walk is a key component of Reconciliation Canada's "Reconciliation in Action: A National Engagement Strategy", which has been recognized by the Department of Canadian Heritage as a Canada 150 Signature Initiative. As the nation marks the 150th anniversary of Confederation, the Walk presents a unique opportunity to reflect, and to celebrate a new way forward for the next 150 years.

This report recommends allocating a grant of \$500,000 to Reconciliation Canada in support of the 2017 Walk for Reconciliation. Funding for this grant will be drawn in full from the Major Special Events Reserve Fund, and is subject to the conditions outlined below. This financial support will contribute to local community engagement and outreach, as well as event production, while supporting the objectives of the City of Toronto Bidding and Hosting Strategy for Significant Special Events, and the fulfillment of key Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, and the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, recommend that:

1. City Council increase the 2017 Economic Development and Culture Operating Budget by \$0.500 million gross, \$0 net, fully funded from the Major Special Events

Reserve Fund (XR1218), to provide a grant of \$0.500 million to Reconciliation Canada to produce the 2017 Walk for Reconciliation in Toronto, with \$0.050 million to be advanced following Council approval of this report, and the balance subject to the following conditions:

- a. satisfactory completion of a structured application;
- b. approval of funding from the provincial and federal governments; and
- c. execution of a signed funding agreement with reporting requirements.

2. City Council direct the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, and the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, to form a working group with relevant City Divisions and Agencies to advise on logistics, community engagement and event planning.

3. City Council direct the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, and the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, to report to the Aboriginal Affairs Committee following the event on the outcomes of the 2017 Walk for Reconciliation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report recommends increasing the Economic Development and Culture Division's 2017 Operating Budget by \$0.500 million gross, \$0 net, fully funded by the Major Special Events Reserve Fund (XR1218), to provide a grant to Reconciliation Canada to produce the 2017 Walk for Reconciliation in Toronto, with \$0.050 million to be advanced following Council approval of this report, and the balance subject to the conditions identified in the recommendations.

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

DECISION HISTORY

In April 2016, City Council adopted a report from the City Manager outlining the City's plan to fulfill key Calls to Action recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EX14.1>

At its June 2016 meeting, City Council approved the City of Toronto Bidding and Hosting Strategy for Significant Special Events, which presented a framework for identifying and evaluating requests for support from major events.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.ED12.4>

In December 2016, City Council requested that the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, and other City Divisions and Agencies as appropriate, support Reconciliation Canada's efforts to

host a Reconciliation Walk on September 24, 2017, in Toronto, including any in kind support as necessary.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EX20.20>

COMMENTS

Reconciliation Canada is an Indigenous-led charitable organization, recognized as a leading voice for reconciliation, and a catalyst and guide for social change. Through the development of partnerships and community outreach programs, Reconciliation Canada seeks to engage people in open and honest conversations to understand diverse histories and experiences. Highlights of the organization's past programming include the 2013 Walk for Reconciliation in Vancouver, which drew over 70,000 participants, and dialogue workshops and special events marking the close of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In 2017, coinciding with the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation, Reconciliation Canada is launching "Reconciliation in Action: A National Engagement Strategy", which will examine and document perceptions, actions and aspirations of Canadians in relation to reconciliation. Reconciliation in Action has been named by the Department of Canadian Heritage as a Canada 150 Signature Initiative.

As part of this commemorative program, Reconciliation Canada is staging large-scale "Celebrations of Reconciliation" across Canada, with the signature event taking place in Toronto on September 24, 2017. The Celebration of Reconciliation will include a 4-kilometre Walk for Reconciliation through the downtown core, and will feature cultural performances, a showcase for local artisans, food vendors, community partner activations, and more. Keynote speeches on a main stage will be broadcast to concurrent events in Winnipeg and Vancouver, and to a national and international audience through a social media live stream.

Following a presentation to the Aboriginal Affairs Committee, and with direction from City Council, Reconciliation Canada has submitted an initial proposal to the City of Toronto to fund a portion of the Toronto-based event. City staff have reviewed this request using the criteria outlined in the City of Toronto Bidding and Hosting Strategy for Significant Special Events, and have concluded that the proposal meets the requirements to receive funding and in-kind support. The event proposal also supports the City's efforts to fulfill key Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission related to commemoration, sports, and health.

Staff recommend allocating a grant of \$500,000 to Reconciliation Canada, subject to conditions including the satisfactory completion of a structured application, the execution of a funding agreement, and approval of sufficient funding from the provincial and federal governments to carry out the event. This grant would be funded in full through the Major Special Events Reserve Fund. To facilitate the immediate development of community engagement activities ahead of the event, an initial instalment of \$50,000 would be paid, with the remainder to be issued following the fulfillment of the grant conditions.

In addition to the grant, the City will provide in-kind event planning and community engagement support to Reconciliation Canada through an interdivisional working group. Staff from Equity, Diversity and Human Rights will work with event organizers in the coming weeks to develop community engagement strategies to raise awareness of the event among local audiences. Economic Development and Culture staff, along with other City Divisions and Agencies where appropriate, will assist event organizers with logistics and planning for the Walk for Reconciliation.

This report also recommends that City Council direct the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, and the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, to report to the Aboriginal Affairs Committee following the event on the outcomes of the 2017 Walk for Reconciliation.

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