

From: [Crystal Basi](#)
To: [Executive Committee](#)
Subject: My comments for 2017.EX26.25 on June 19, 2017 Executive Committee
Date: Monday, June 19, 2017 8:49:04 AM

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the June 19, 2017 Executive Committee meeting on item 2017.EX26.25, Proposed Aboriginal Office for the City of Toronto

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

On Behalf of the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC)

Reasons to Support an Indigenous Office at the City of Toronto

In 2010 the Statement of Commitment was adopted by Council. This statement is not reflected in any divisional strategy or policy. There is considerable lack of awareness across staff and council of this statement.

Example #1 The 2015 Poverty Reduction Strategy did not include consultation with the Indigenous communities, utilize local research within the report, include any significant or dedicated mention of the Indigenous communities in Toronto. Yet, 90 percent of all Indigenous people live below the low income cut off (LICO) (St. Michael's Well Living House, Our Health Counts Toronto, Preliminary Findings, 2016)

Example #2 The Equity, Diversity, and Human Rights Division is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Statement of Commitments to Aboriginal People. However, in the EDHR Strategic Plan (2015 -2018) the Statement of Commitment is not mentioned.

An Indigenous Office would immediately work with city divisions to create strategic practices to honour the Statement of Commitment and a holistic evaluation tool to monitor success. This work needs to be developed with Indigenous communities.

An Indigenous Office would work with divisions responsible for implementing the Action Plan Framework that was accepted by Council in 2014. This includes the Aboriginal Employment Strategy, Cultural Competency Training for City Staff, and increasing Indigenous Civic Engagement on Boards and Committees.

The Indigenous Office would be responsible for developing and monitoring a long-term action plan on reconciliation that envelopes the Statement of Commitment, and Action Plan Framework and create meaningful and impactful activities to demonstrate commitment to reconciliation. This fulsome action plan would have strong accountability measures, including the impact that it is having on the local Indigenous communities.

There are opportunities to leverage provincial and federal reconciliation funds to support the development and sustainability of the Office. TASSC is willing to work with the City of Toronto to secure these funds.