

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM9.28	ACTION			Ward: 13
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Authorize approval to accept federal funding for the Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Mike Layton

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Mike Layton, recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, in anticipation of a favourable Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship funding grant announcement by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario), to enter into and administer a funding agreement with FedDev Ontario for up to \$5,000,000 in federal support, via a non-repayable contribution, for the period April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2024.
2. City Council increase the 2019 Approved Operating Budget for Economic Development and Culture and associated service levels by \$1,150,000.00 gross and \$0 net; future year allocations will be included in future year budget submissions for Economic Development and Culture.
3. City Council delegate authority to the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to seek and receive future funding from the federal government for the Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and to receive and expend those funds as specified through the funding agreements accompanying the funding.
4. City Council direct the City Manager, working with the Manager, Indigenous Affairs Office, and the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, to report back to the Economic and Community Development Committee by second quarter of 2020 on the progress of the Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship project.

Summary

Toronto is the most diverse City in the world and home to approximately 70,000 Indigenous persons, making it one of the largest Indigenous urban populations in Canada. Indigenous people's history can be traced back thousands of years, yet, unlike neighbourhoods such as

Chinatown or Little Italy established by newer immigrants and recent Business Improvement Area organizing, there is no formally recognized Indigenous business and cultural area in the City, despite Toronto being a City historically created on treaty and Indigenous land.

In 2012, early discussions about creating an Indigenous business centre and cultural district in Toronto began when the ward Councillor and local Indigenous community members met to explore the viability of the idea. A year later, the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto through an enabling grant from Metcalf, hired an Indigenous-owned firm to study the feasibility of creating an Indigenous Business and Cultural District along Dundas Street East in the downtown neighbourhood of the Garden District. Through consultation and interviews with Indigenous leaders and business owners in Toronto, The Aboriginal Economic Development Project report help set the foundation for the work ahead by identifying key areas of importance, including the keen community interest to redesign, revision, and rethink Indigenous business and entrepreneurship within an innovative and contemporary mindset.

That same year in 2013, the ward Councillor worked with City Planning to identify a new development at 200 Dundas Street East as a potential location for the Indigenous business centre and incubator. Over a period of five years, with community support and through extensive Section 37 and community benefits negotiation with the developer, the partial first and second floor of the building's podium, initially 14,000 square feet and growing to 16,000 and eventually designed to an expansive 20,000 square feet, was secured by the City of Toronto to become an incubator and co-working space dedicated to serving Indigenous entrepreneurs and the local Indigenous community.

Construction for the overall development is well underway with the City taking possession of its dedicated space in 2019. Working with local Indigenous leadership towards an opening by early 2021, it is anticipated that the Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship will be among the largest incubators dedicated to serving Indigenous entrepreneurs in North America and possibly the world.

The new Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship will enable Indigenous-owned business operators and entrepreneurs to work with the broader community to access Indigenous-led services, technology and talent through virtual and physical co-working locations. It will also serve as an anchor for what could become Canada's first-ever urban Indigenous Business and Cultural District, accelerating the transformation of the Dundas Street East corridor into a world leader for Indigenous innovation and business leadership.

The Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship will be a culturally and technology rich environment to support the incubation of start-ups led by Indigenous majority-owned businesses, enhancing economic development by making it a physical hub and meeting place for Indigenous entrepreneurs, industry partners, customers and more. Technology-enabled meeting and convening physical and virtual spaces will serve connections across the Greater Toronto Area and to Indigenous communities in and outside of Toronto, across Canada and around the world. The Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship will develop wide-ranging training programmes delivered in partnership with universities, colleges and other educational institutions to help Indigenous entrepreneurs scale-up their businesses, and reach local, regional, national and international markets.

The Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship will be an Indigenous-led and operated entity with an initial program offering, which will be expanded over time. In the

interim, City staff will work with a Leadership Advisory Circle comprised of local Indigenous leaders and entrepreneurs to develop the business plan, design and construction plans, and governance structure.

The Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship is an important initiative to advance economic opportunity for Indigenous people in the City of Toronto with significant federal funding proposed for the project.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM9.28