

# **Jane Finch Initiative Indigenous Engagement Strategy**

***Draft for Consultation***

City of Toronto – City Planning | Social Development Finance &  
Administration | Economic Development and Culture

Jane Finch Community and Family Centre

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## Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the land we are on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit and is within the territory of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty.

We are all Treaty people. Many of us of have come here as settlers, immigrants, newcomers in this generation or generations past. We'd like to also acknowledge and honour those who came here involuntarily, particularly those who are descended from those brought here through enslavement.

## Forward

This draft engagement strategy has been prepared for consultation with Indigenous communities. It was developed jointly by the three City of Toronto divisions leading the Jane Finch Initiative (JFI): City Planning; Social Development, Finance & Administration; and Economic Development & Culture. The JFI staff team would like to thank the Indigenous Affairs Office (IAO) for support in preparing this document and staff within Shelter Support & Housing (SSHA) and Parks, Forestry & Recreation (PFR) for advice.

## Background

The Jane Finch Initiative is a City of Toronto and resident-led project to plan for the future of the Jane and Finch area. Together, we are developing a community development plan and a land use plan so that residents and businesses are supported as the area changes over time with the opening of the Finch West LRT. The Jane Finch Initiative is about leveraging the investment in light rail transit (LRT) for the benefit of local communities. The geographic focus of the Initiative is [Neighbourhood 24 - Black Creek](#) and [Neighbourhood 25 - Glenfield-Jane Heights](#), centred on the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue West.

The initiative involves three integrated streams of work:

- 1) Comprehensive engagement (ongoing);
- 2) A community development plan including a local economic opportunities plan; and
- 3) An update to the land use planning framework.

Through an engagement process in which residents shape the planning of their community, the purpose of the Jane Finch Initiative is to align people- and place-focused initiatives into an integrated complete-community framework for the area. The aim is to develop an integrated plan for the Jane Finch area that advances social equity and economic inclusion for current and future residents, encourages the appropriate kinds of growth and development in the area, and guides investment in community improvements. *It should be underlined that the work on the Jane Finch Initiative will not involve physical undertakings, including excavation or construction. The opportunity (to be confirmed) is on place-making, restoration of identity, place-keeping, connectivity to Black Creek, food sovereignty, community services and facilities, among others.* More information on the project can be found at [www.toronto.ca/janefinch](http://www.toronto.ca/janefinch).

For the purposes of this strategy, the term "Indigenous" refers to First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, communities and nations that have been granted constitutionally protected rights under Sections 25 and 35 of the 1982 Constitution Act. Within these three groupings, it is imperative to recognize that there are a diversity of nations with distinct languages, cultures, teachings, and traditions. In 2010, Toronto City Council adopted the [Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities](#). The Statement of Commitment identifies seven specific goals which mirror the [Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#) that are City priorities for implementation.

Due to the distinct experience of trauma associated with colonization and the historical and ongoing relationship with Canada, it is imperative that Indigenous peoples are engaged in a way that promotes Indigenous sovereignty and well-being. The City of Toronto wants to honour Indigenous peoples' inherent right to self-determination and autonomy through trauma-informed approaches. "Nothing about us, without us." These words are vital to engagement with any Indigenous community or organization. They mean that decisions affecting Indigenous people always require input from the Indigenous people they affect. As such, this strategy will guide staff from the City of Toronto, and from the Jane Finch Centre as community partner, to engage with: a)

treaty holders and the traditional care-takers of Tkaronto, b) Indigenous residents of the Jane and Finch study area and the broader city, and c) not-for-profit agencies with a mandate to support Indigenous residents, families and workers.

## Demographics

365

Indigenous residents  
in Jane and Finch

46,315

Indigenous residents in the  
Toronto Census Metropolitan Area

Canada's 2016 Census reports that the Indigenous population within the Toronto CMA increased from 36,995, five years earlier, to 46,315, of which 365 persons identifying as Indigenous live in the JFI study area. Census data, however, is viewed as problematic by Indigenous communities who often believe the numbers are much higher. Some Indigenous people do not participate in the census due to political beliefs. Others are not counted because of frequent moves or homelessness. Agencies serving Indigenous communities in Toronto however, estimate that there are between 70,000 and 100,000 Indigenous residents. Whatever caveats apply to Census data, the largest Indigenous community in Ontario, and the fourth largest Indigenous community in Canada, resides in Toronto.

## Purpose

Recognition of Indigenous Peoples' unique relationship to land and resources, their role in land use planning and the contribution Indigenous Peoples knowledge has on land use planning decisions is acknowledged within the Province of Ontario's Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020. The PPS also clearly acknowledges the Duty to Consult on matters that may impact Aboriginal (Indigenous) rights as protected by Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution and encourages meaningful relationships that promote knowledge-sharing and inform decision-making on land use decisions. The 2020 PPS states that Planning authorities shall engage and coordinate with Indigenous Peoples on matters of land use planning and cultural heritage; and clearly acknowledges the potential benefits a healthy relationship with Indigenous communities could have on growth and development outcomes within Ontario.

Engagement with Indigenous communities is an essential step towards reconciliation and in honouring Indigenous sovereignty. While the existing Indigenous population in the study area is relatively small, there is great potential for the Jane and Finch area to foster Indigenous community; restore Indigenous identity within the landscape and in public spaces; connect people to arts and culture; and build community resources and programs in the future, among others.

To engage most effectively it is important to understand the treaties and the rights of Indigenous peoples, recognize and uphold Indigenous governance systems and cultural protocols. This awareness will be reflected in [our approach](#) to engagement with Indigenous communities and this work will be supported by the City's [Indigenous Affairs Office \(IAO\)](#).

## Our Deliverables

### Engagement Reports

Throughout the engagement process, conversations with Indigenous peoples and agencies will be summarized in engagement reports, which will be made available online through the project website, [toronto.ca/janefinch](http://toronto.ca/janefinch). Where appropriate meeting recordings will be made available as well.

### Phasing: from Vision and Guiding Principles to Draft Policies and Final Plans

In Phase 1, the project team will develop a vision and guiding principles for the future of Jane and Finch in collaboration with the community and propose a set of policy directions based on comments and ideas heard through the first round of engagement. In Phase 2, City staff will engage with residents on a draft Community Development Plan and Land Use Planning Framework Update, which will include a Secondary Plan and other guidelines for development. In Phase 3, staff will present final plans to the community and for consideration by City Council.

## Guiding Principles

The five key principles that will shape how City staff and partners engage with Indigenous communities -- learn, reflect, respect, build relationships, and reconcile -- are outlined below. Input on these guiding principles will be sought during the first phase of consultation with Indigenous communities.

### Learn

- Invest time in learning about:
  - The history of Tkaronto
  - Residential Schools
  - The Indian Act
  - Traditional forms of healing and wellbeing
  - The Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
  - The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

### Reflect

- Learn about the history of Tkaronto and reflect upon the legacy of colonization, including Residential Schools and the Indian Act.
- Understand the treaties and rights of Indigenous peoples, and uphold Indigenous governance systems;

- Understand the implications of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on our work.

### Respect

- Demonstrate awareness and respect for Indigenous communities, cultural protocols and practices, local knowledge and decision-making systems, and self-determination.
- Practice with cultural safety and cultural humility through active listening, participation in cultural practices/protocol and demonstrating respect for traditional ways of knowing and healing.

### Build Relationships

- Create and maintain respectful relationships with local Indigenous communities.
- Take sufficient time and resources to support these on-going relationships.
- Understand that community-driven engagement can play a role in community healing, which may require additional time.
- Seek direction from Indigenous community leaders, partners and elders on how and with whom engagement should be carried out, including identifying the intended and expected outcomes of engagement.
- Report back on how the knowledge and wisdom shared has affected recommended policy, programming and other actions before City Council.

### Reconcile

- Confront and eliminate biases in our own practice.
- Collaborate with Indigenous knowledge-keepers and community members to understand the issues and topics that affect them and their traditional territories.
- Provide suggestions that can sustain the change created as knowledge is acquired and applied.

## Our Approach

The proposed approach centres on conversations to be led by an Indigenous facilitator, supported by Elders and knowledge-keepers. Discussions will focus on the broader goals that the Initiative should achieve with a strong emphasis on youth, women, Indigenous [heritage](#), and Indigenous-led place-making and place-keeping opportunities.

There are three groupings of communities considered within this approach:

1. Treaty Holders and Original Caretakers of Tkaronto
  - Mississaugas of the Credit (Holders of Treaty 13)
  - Six Nations of the Grand River
  - Huron-Wendat

## 2. Urban organizations: Arts and Culture, Human Service Organizations, Business Organizations

- Focusing on human services, arts and culture (the hub), and Indigenous economic opportunities
- We will reach out to the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC) an umbrella organization that is "...the leading not-for-profit research, policy, and advocacy organization that addresses the social determinants of health to improve and enhance the socio-economic prospects and cultural well-being of Aboriginal peoples living in the City of Toronto" – to request their assistance in reaching out to engage with their membership of organizations and agencies that include:
  - 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations
  - Aboriginal Legal Services
  - ANDPVA/Arts Indigena
  - Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre
  - Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training
  - Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
  - Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
  - Na-Me-Res (Native Men's Residence)
  - Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto
  - Nishnawbe Homes
  - Thunder Woman Healing Lodge Society
  - Wigwamen Incorporated
  - Urban Indigenous Education Centre – TDSB
  - Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle
  - Toronto and York Region Metis Council
  - Toronto Inuit Association
  - Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy
  - Gabriel Dumont Non-Profit Homes Inc.
- Other urban Indigenous organizations that may not be aligned with TASSC, such as:
  - Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business
  - York University Indigenous Students Association
  - Sweet Grass Roots Collective

## 3. Jane and Finch Residents

- Direct engagement with Indigenous residents in Jane and Finch, including through ensuring Indigenous representation on the Community Advisory Committee.

The City is working in collaboration with the [Jane Finch Community and Family Centre \(janefinchcentre.org\)](http://janefinchcentre.org) to engage with the broader community. The Jane Finch Community and Family Centre's role will be to support engagement and facilitation as advised by the Indigenous facilitation partner in this process.



## Practices for Meaningful Engagement

The following practices will set the foundation for the engagement process and will be reflected in the [Work Plan](#). City staff will tailor practices to the geography and the Land Use and Community Development Plan components of the Jane Finch Initiative, where necessary

- Seek direction from Indigenous community leaders and partners on how and with whom engagement should be carried out;
- Work with Indigenous partners to clearly identify the expected and intended outcomes of engagement; and
- City staff will:
  - Build Indigenous cultural proficiency among our team and community partners
  - Follow cultural protocols, such as provision of tobacco ties when requesting engagement
  - Engage on a nation-to-nation basis as early as possible
  - Undertake mutually beneficial engagement with a focus on relationship building
  - Strive for a co-planned process
  - Be clear and transparent on time/resources and on scope of the planning exercise and what it can achieve
  - Provide honoraria where appropriate

## Work Plan

#	Activities	Description	Timing	Considerations
1	Internal Consultation to Finalize the Indigenous Engagement Strategy			
1.1	Consult City staff and City advisory tables on a draft Indigenous Engagement Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IAO staff (Jeff D'Hondt, Jennifer Franks)</li> <li>• Indigenous Placemaking Advisory Circle (tbc)</li> <li>• Staff in Divisions with experience in Indigenous engagement (PFR, SSHA)</li> <li>• SDFA Community Engagement Officer for the area</li> <li>• Aboriginal Affairs Committee</li> </ul>	Q3-Q4 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage AAAC by Q1 2022 at the very latest, for feedback on the engagement plan</li> <li>• The Indigenous Placemaking Advisory Circle may not yet be active (in process of establishment by IAO)</li> </ul>

1.2	Consult community partner and CAC on a draft Indigenous Engagement Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jane Finch Community and Family Centre</li> <li>Community Advisory Committee</li> </ul>	Q4 2021	
2	Engage with Indigenous Communities, Receive Input on the engagement strategy and Suggestions on How to Stay Connected and Undertake Meaningful Engagement throughout the Jane Finch Initiative			
2.1	Initiate engagement with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treaty Holders and Original Caretakers</li> <li>Organizations representing Inuit and Métis</li> </ul>	Initiate conversations with First Nations, Inuit and Métis to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask about how they would like to be engaged throughout the project</li> <li>Receive input on the draft engagement strategy</li> <li>Determine next steps on engagement throughout the policy development phase</li> </ul>	Q4 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage first with the Mississaugas of the Credit as the Treaty Holders for the area</li> </ul>
2.2	Involve an Indigenous Facilitator and invite an Elder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire a local facilitator or Indigenous agency to facilitate conversations on Vision, Guiding Principles, Issues and onwards to policy development within Phase 2: process to be further elaborated</li> <li>Invite an elder to participate in meetings (with honorarium)</li> </ul>	Q4 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact the IAO for a list of facilitators (and or organizations (e.g., CIPS, which was involved in Mt. Dennis) – see Appendix A</li> <li>Contact Mississaugas of the Credit FN for Elder resources (e.g., Gary Sault)</li> <li>Contact PFR for rate schedule (See Appendix B)</li> </ul>
2.3	Meet with Indigenous-Serving Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outreach through TASSC to key service providers city-wide who will inform their networks about the opportunity to get involved</li> </ul>	Q4 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TASSC is a conduit to 18 organizations</li> <li>Develop list of groups that should be engaged who aren't a part of TASSC</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm how agencies would like to be engaged throughout the initiative</li> <li>• Engage on key aspects of the JFI, including the Community Services and Facilities Strategy and the Community Development Plan</li> </ul>		
3	Engage with local Indigenous residents and broader Indigenous communities on planning for the future of Jane and Finch, with iterations of engagement throughout the phases of the project			
3.1	Learning Circles/workshops on Vision and ideas advanced through the Ideas Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach through TASSC and agency networks</li> <li>• Urban Indigenous Facebook (leverage Facebook Neighbourhoods)</li> <li>• Partner with local Indigenous influencer</li> <li>• Instagram, Tik Tok</li> <li>• LinkedIn – Jeff Schiffer</li> <li>• Further outreach through TASSC</li> <li>• Receive input on ideas related to public realm, housing, social development and inclusive economic opportunities</li> </ul>	Q1 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweet Grass Roots Collective" have a relationship with BCC farm and may be a group we should engage</li> <li>• Provide online access to materials at a time that convenient for residents/community</li> </ul>
3.2	Learning Circles and Workshops for draft policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in existing community discussions (where appropriate) to receive input on draft policies related to land use and community development</li> </ul>	Q2 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-person and asynchronous options required</li> </ul>
3.3	Closing the Loop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect where input was integrated (and if not why) through final engagement reporting</li> </ul>	Q4 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should include both in-person and virtual communication</li> </ul>

## Appendix A: Potential Indigenous Facilitators

### IAO Recommended Indigenous Facilitators:

- [Michelle Sault](#), Minokaw Consulting
- [Bob Goulais](#), Nbisiiing Consulting Inc.
- [Leah Horzempa](#), Sister Circle Consulting
- [Gary Pritchard](#), 4 Directions of Conservation Consulting Services

### Other Potential Indigenous Facilitators:

- Cambium Indigenous Professional Services (CIPS): [Cambium Indigenous Professional Services | Our Services \(indigenouseaware.com\)](http://indigenouseaware.com)

## Appendix B: PF&R Honorarium Framework

The following check market survey can be used to help determine the appropriate amount for honoraria offered for participation: [Honorarium Framework \(chkmt.com\)](https://www.chkmt.com).