

Update on Current Economic Development and Culture Initiatives with Indigenous Communities

Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee

May 18, 2022





The purpose of this presentation is to update the Advisory Committee on current Economic Development and Culture initiatives with Indigenous communities guided by Toronto's Reconciliation Action Plan.

These include:

Action 20 – Improve Indigenous Economic Development

Action 16 – Celebrate Indigenous Arts and Culture

Action 15 – Support Indigenous Placekeeping

Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

- *Reconciliation Action Plan (20C): Ensure the successful development and operation of the Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ICIE) – an Indigenous-led space with programming, services and supports for Indigenous Peoples as they develop, launch and grow their businesses.*



Indigenous Arts and Culture

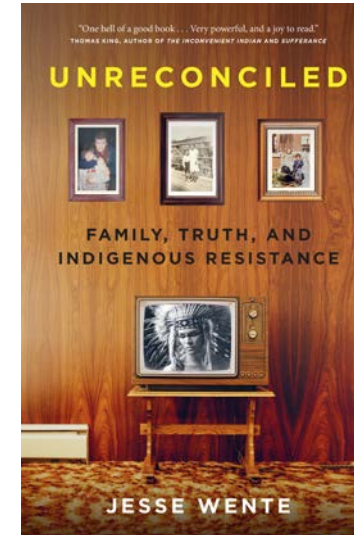
- Reconciliation Action Plan (16A): Work with Indigenous communities to apply an Indigenous truth-telling and storytelling lens at City-owned museums and City programs.*



Indigenizing Land Held by Institutions and Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada Giant Floor Map, part of Doors Open Toronto 2022.



As part of ArtworxTO the Red Embers project that has been reinstalled with City support at Woodbine Beach.



Jesse Wente's Unreconciled featured as part of By the Lake Book Club at Assembly Hall.



Dr. Julie Nagam
Nuit Blanche artistic director for the 2020 and 2022 events. She is Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Arts, Collaboration and Digital Media and is an Associate Professor at the University of Winnipeg.

Spirit Garden

- *Reconciliation Action Plan (15B): Support Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre in the establishment of the Spirit Garden in Nathan Philips Square by 2023.*
- IRSS LEGACY Indian Residential School Survivors Restoration of Identity CALL TO ACTION #82



Indigenous Placekeeping

- *Reconciliation Action Plan (15A): The Economic Development & Culture division will leverage Indigenous placemaking and placekeeping initiatives to create opportunities for Indigenous artists, including access to creative spaces.*



Photo credit: Queering Place Earth Art Installation - Creative Lead, Naty Tremblay, offers an acknowledgement of these lands. (drone photography by Jahmal Nugent)

Cultural Districts Program Proposal

- Response to community-based advocacy and Council motions
- Senior Indigenous leadership on the advisory committee, sub-contractors, and community-engagement lead for the Cultural Districts Program proposal
- Collaboration with a diverse range of community stakeholders
- Intended to maintain the local culture of Toronto's unique and vibrant communities while welcoming new community members and cultural expressions



Listening and Learning

Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee advice and guidance at the meeting on Oct. 22, 2021

Indigenous Sovereignty, Truth, Justice and Reconciliation

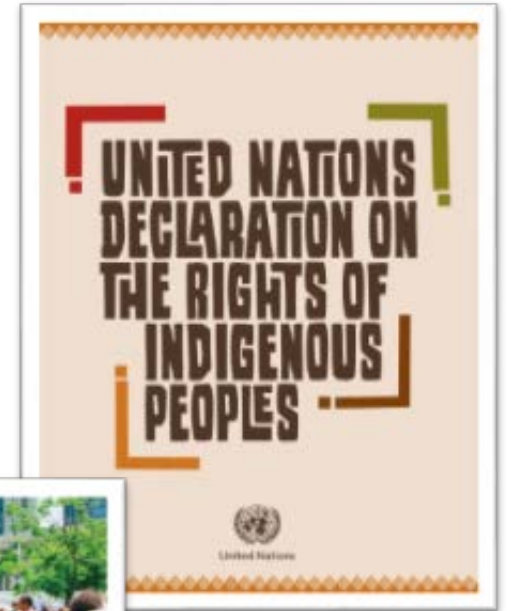
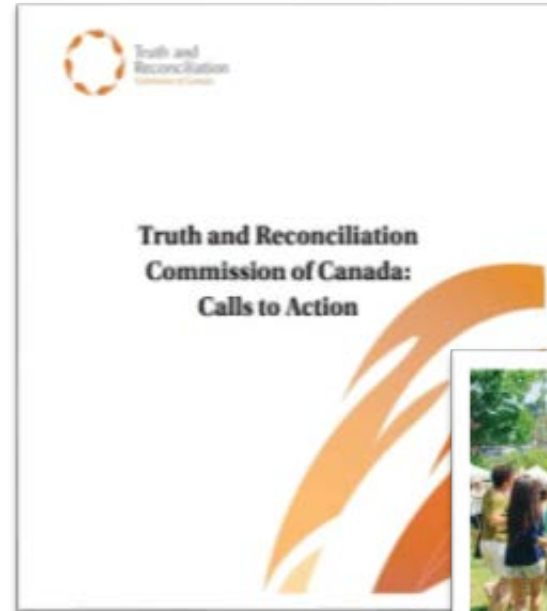
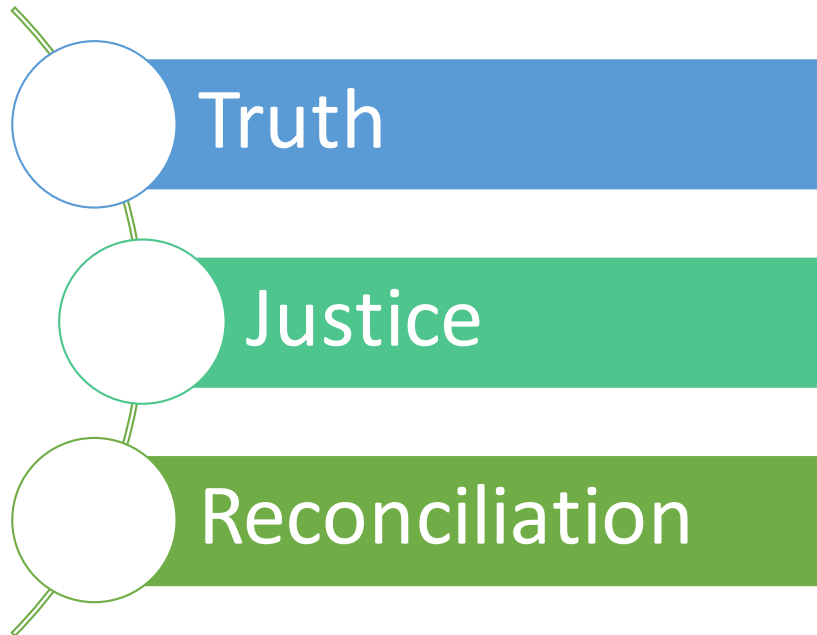
- Requested a report back to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee.
- Caution that some community members may be open and receptive to being in the spotlight, while others may think it is unsafe.
- Make sure the Indigenous community where you consider bringing a cultural district is fully aware of what the positive and potentially unsafe aspects are of having a cultural district. This is particularly true for Indigenous women and girls.
- Need Indigenous advisors to assist, such as the Native Women's Resource Centre, Toronto Council Fire, or other organizations.
- Be aware that there are also individuals that have lived experience, and that have worked in Native community organizations.

More visibility citywide and through key organizations and businesses

- Should be an Indigenous presence throughout the city, not a localized cluster, because the entire land is Indigenous land.
- Cluster of Indigenous businesses at Christie and Bloor, Spadina and Bloor, Dundas and George
- The Indigenous community has not had the luxury of a historic clustering of businesses and residence in Toronto.
- Given the historic crimes against Indigenous people that took place in this country, this program should also be an opportunity to support new businesses.
- One of the challenges for attracting more Indigenous businesses is the availability and cost of spaces.
- Given Covid-19 and the City's guidelines to work with the Indigenous community, this is an opportune time to take over again.

Continuing Research and Engagement

Moving at the speed of trust



Emerging Next Steps

- Ideas for consideration and further exploration:
 - o Connect the City's Reconciliation Action Plan, Indigenous Placekeeping, Ravine Strategy and Cultural Districts Program to directly address cultural erasure and make Indigenous culture more visible across the city.
 - o Explore opportunities to align with affordable housing strategies.
 - o Integrate placekeeping work with tangible advancement for Indigenous businesses, employment, language and ceremony.



Thank you