

Progress Update on the Implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan

Date: November 24, 2025
To: Economic and Community Development Committee
From: Deputy City Manager, Community Development and Social Services
Wards: All

SUMMARY

In April 2022, City Council adopted the [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) (the Plan) to guide future discussions and Council recommendations that advance truth, justice, and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, inspired by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People, and the City's [Commitments to Indigenous Peoples](#). The Plan includes 28 actions and 141 sub-actions to guide City staff.

Over the past three years, the Plan has guided City divisions, agencies, and corporations to take unprecedented and bold steps toward Reconciliation with Indigenous communities. The City has seen the most impactful outcomes when initiatives are rooted in strong community partnerships and a commitment to co-creating¹ solutions with Indigenous communities.

This report reflects on the first four years of implementation, highlighting progress, challenges, and opportunities. It showcases strong and authentic collaborations between City divisions and Indigenous communities that created programs anchored by the principles of self-determination and co-creation, offering transformative support for urban Indigenous people. The report also acknowledges key lessons learned in the engagement, design, implementation and monitoring of the Plan which has led some community partners to view their collaborations with City divisions as separate from the Plan.

Since 2022, 103 of the 141 sub-actions have started and are in progress; 3 are completed. While internally focused work has advanced some of the actions outlined in the Plan, the City has more work to do to ensure that co-creation with urban Indigenous

¹ Co-created initiatives are recommended to Council for approval before implementation.

communities is consistent and foundational to further Reconciliation efforts. In doing so, Reconciliation efforts will be community-centred, effective and meaningful.

With the recent restructure of the Community and Social Services portfolio, the Indigenous Affairs Office, along with oversight and support for the Reconciliation Action Plan now fall under the leadership of the Deputy City Manager, Community Development and Social Services. This move offers an opportunity for reflection on the City's community development approaches to Reconciliation, and to continue to rebuild trust with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities in Toronto so that the next leg of our Reconciliation journey is grounded in mutual understanding and meaningful relationships.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Deputy City Manager, Community Development and Social Services recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Deputy City Manager, Community Development and Social Services, to engage with Indigenous communities on the topic of the City's Reconciliation Action Plan to determine the next phase of Reconciliation priorities and report to Toronto City Council by the end of the second quarter in 2027.
2. City Council authorize the Director, Indigenous Affairs Office to negotiate and enter into agreement(s) with not-for-profit agencies and vendors as required to advance the City's Reconciliation priorities in a form acceptable to the City Solicitor and within approved budget limits until June 30, 2027.
3. City Council authorize the Executive Director, Social Development, to provide one-time funding of \$350,000 to the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council to increase organizational capacity and support for City projects.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report provides an update on the implementation of both the Reconciliation Action Plan and projects co-created and co-led by City of Toronto divisions and Indigenous community partners between April 2022 and October 2025.

Since implementation, a growing number of City divisions have taken steps to lead Reconciliation initiatives, from 13 divisions in 2022 to 21 this year as outlined in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 summarizes Reconciliation efforts undertaken by 9 City agencies and corporations.

Notable cumulative investments in Reconciliation in the first four years of the plan include:

- **Housing:** \$120.568 million in capital and operating grants, subsidies and financial incentives to 13 Indigenous housing providers and Indigenous organizations.
- **Indigenous Funding Framework:** \$7.040 million in grants to support the "take what you need, leave what you don't" community basket approach to funding.
- **The Spirit Garden Project:** \$21.000 million to install a prominent, publicly accessible Residential Schools Monument in response to Call to Action 82.
- **Indigenous Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship:** \$8.817 million in capital expenses and \$2.769 million in operating expenses to support an Indigenous-led space with programming, services and supports for Indigenous entrepreneurs.
- **Toronto Community Crisis Service:** \$18.071 million to support culturally relevant, mobile mental health and crisis supports for Indigenous community members.
- **Toronto Shelter and Support Services:** \$18.781 million in operating grants to Indigenous Shelter and Support Service providers and \$3.506 million in capital costs to build shelter space for Indigenous communities.
- **Indigenous Arts and Culture:** Economic Development and Culture provided \$0.991 million to celebrate Indigenous arts and culture, including grants to enable community-led Indigenous cultural initiatives such as exhibitions, workshops, and community gatherings; funding for major new public artworks at Humber Bay Shores Park, Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Library and Community Recreation Centre, and the Glen Road Pedestrian Bridge; and support for ongoing programming and partnerships with Indigenous communities.

Any additional funding required to advance the City's Reconciliation priorities will be submitted through future budget processes for Social Development and relevant City Divisions and Agencies, as required, for consideration along with other City priorities, subject to the City's financial and resource capacity.

This report also recommends one-time funding of \$0.350 million to the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council. Funding for this is available within the 2025 Operating Budget for Social Development.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer have reviewed this report and agree with the information as presented in the Financial Impact section.

RECONCILIATION IMPACT STATEMENT

Indigenous Peoples have endured centuries of colonial trauma, with Canadian institutions perpetuating harm that continues to affect First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities. For generations, government policies dispossessed land, separated families, and attempted to erase language and ceremony. These harms did not stop

with one era—they disrupted identities, devalued Indigenous traditions, and deeply damaged kinship ties.

The Reconciliation Action Plan seeks to address these harms through short and long-term actions aimed at building and sustaining right relations with Indigenous Peoples and partners.

DECISION HISTORY

On December 17 - 18, 2024, City Council adopted the Indigenous Funding Framework to guide grant making to Indigenous not-for-profit organizations and groups by Social Development.

[Agenda Item History - 2024.EC17.3](#)

On April 6 - 7, 2022, City Council unanimously adopted the Reconciliation Action Plan to guide future discussions and Council recommendations for the City of Toronto and Toronto Public Service in advancing truth, justice, and Reconciliation.

[Agenda Item History - 2022.EX31.1](#)

On June 8, 2021, City Council directed the Director of the Indigenous Affairs Office to report to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee and Executive Committee on additional actions needed to advance truth, Reconciliation, and justice. The directive included outlining how the City would ensure accountability to the community and identifying any required resources.

[Agenda Item History - 2021.MM34.42](#)

On December 5, 2017, City Council formally expressed support for the establishment of the Indigenous Affairs Office to be designed, developed and reflective of the Indigenous community's vision.

[Agenda Item History - 2017.EX29.36](#)

On December 9, 2015, City Council in consultation with the Aboriginal Affairs Committee, identified eight Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's report as priorities for implementation.

[Agenda Item History - 2015.EX10.16](#)

On July 10, 2010, City Council adopted the Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal Communities in Toronto in the Towards a Framework for Urban Aboriginal Relations in Toronto report.

[Agenda Item History - 2010.EX45.5](#)

COMMENTS

Background

Indigenous Peoples, including the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Chippewa, and Seneca, have lived on the lands now called Toronto for thousands of years. Toronto is

home to one of Canada's largest urban Indigenous populations, with an estimated 80,000–100,000 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people² calling it home.

Colonial policies erased traditions, languages, and family lines, and systemic discrimination persists in Canadian institutions, including municipal systems. These harms have led to poverty, unemployment, over-representation in justice and child welfare systems, poor health, and low education rates which are direct consequences of attempted genocide.³ Despite this, Indigenous communities show resilience, reclaiming land, rights, culture, and language.

In April 2022, Toronto City Council unanimously adopted the Reconciliation Action Plan to map and guide the actions that the City of Toronto will take from 2022 to 2032 and beyond to achieve truth, Reconciliation and justice. The Reconciliation Action Plan outlines 28 actions and 141 sub-actions across five themes: restoring truth; righting relations and sharing power; contributing to justice; making financial reparations; and guiding the Indigenous Affairs Office.

Walking the Path Together

City divisions have a long history of partnership with the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC) and member agencies to advance Indigenous-led strategies rooted in self-determination. TASSC is the leading research, policy, and social planning organization addressing the social determinants of health to improve and enhance the socio-economic prospects and cultural well-being of Indigenous peoples living in the city of Toronto. With 27 member agencies, TASSC represents every Indigenous-led not-for-profit social service provider supporting Indigenous people living in Toronto and serves two-thirds of Indigenous population in Toronto. TASSC brings together key stakeholders from across the urban Indigenous landscape in a way that promotes unity and collaboration.

City collaboration with the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council is vital to advancing the City's [commitment to right relations](#) where the City actively forms relationships "through meaningful engagement, partnership, collaboration and co-development, and power shifting and sharing with Indigenous communities and organizations." This report includes a recommendation to provide enhanced funding to TASSC to increase organizational capacity so that TASSC may address increasing City requests for community engagement and co-creation work.

City-TASSC partnerships that have embodied this commitment have led to important developments that advance Reconciliation:

- The Indigenous Funding Framework, led by Social Development and endorsed by community and Toronto City Council in late 2024, is a co-created approach to funding that prioritizes relationships that uphold Indigenous self-determination, leveraging the community-developed "take what you need, leave what you don't" community basket approach to funding allocation. Since 2021, more than \$7 million

² [OHC-Toronto-2021-Population-Estimates.pdf](#) (welllivinghouse.com)

³ [OHC-TO-Adult-Demographics-.pdf](#) (welllivinghouse.com)

has been distributed to TASSC member agencies to support self-identified needs serving the community including staff salaries, health and safety, food supports, and cultural supports. The development of the Framework builds on changes made to the Toronto Grants Policy in 2019 that acknowledge the unique commitments the City of Toronto has made to supporting Indigenous communities.

- The Spirit Garden Project, led by the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre with support from Economic Development and Culture and Corporate Real Estate Management, was developed in response to Call to Action 82, which advocates for the installation of a prominent, publicly accessible Residential Schools Monument in every capital city to honour Survivors and the children lost to their families and communities. Officially opened on the 2024 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the Spirit Garden is a 20,650-square-foot Indigenous cultural space designed for reflection, community gatherings, and spiritual ceremonies. It welcomes all individuals seeking connection, healing, and understanding.
- The Meeting in the Middle Strategy was co-created by Toronto Shelter and Support Services, TASSC and the Toronto Indigenous Community Advisory Board (TICAB) to foster stronger relationships between City divisions and Indigenous organizations to meaningfully address Indigenous homelessness in Toronto. Developed in 2018, Meeting in the Middle emphasizes the importance of engaging in holistic, inclusive, and meaningful ways. Since its launch, the initiative has significantly strengthened relationships with Indigenous communities, allocated 20% of grant funding to address Indigenous homelessness, and expanded programs and services for Indigenous people, including the opening of the Twin Turtles Indigenous Youth Shelter.
- People and Equity, in partnership with Toronto's Indigenous Employment and Training organization, Miziwe Biik, provided Indigenous youth candidates with a 12-week skill development training program. This training transitioned into 5-month administrative trainee roles across four City divisions. The program resulted in 50% of trainees being retained/reassigned at the end of their participation in the program.
- The Toronto Community Crisis Service was co-created by Social Development and community anchor partners in 2022 and expanded city-wide in 2024 with Indigenous-led mobile crisis teams from 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations, ENAGB Indigenous Youth Agency, and Niiwin Wendaanimak (Four Winds) Indigenous Health and Wellness Program. Since 2022, the City of Toronto has provided \$18 million to Indigenous organizations to provide free, confidential, in-person culturally-relevant mental health supports.

Twenty-eight successful collaborations between the City and community are highlighted in Appendix 1. In these strong collaborations, Indigenous community partners consider their work and partnership with City divisions as distinct from the Reconciliation Action Plan. These initiatives demonstrate how Indigenous self-determination in City-community collaborations drives meaningful funding, policy influence, and service design for Indigenous communities. TASSC leaders have reaffirmed their desire and expectation that City divisions, agencies, and corporations pursue meaningful

collaborations like these with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities as authentic paths to Reconciliation.

Lessons Learned

The Reconciliation Action Plan has laid a foundation for the Toronto Public Service to embark on the journey of Reconciliation. However, its development and implementation have faced challenges. These include:

- Limited co-creation of the Plan's themes and 28 actions with Indigenous community partners. The Reconciliation Action Plan called on City divisions to value the truth and importance of Indigenous calls for "nothing about us, without us", however, some actions have been undertaken without the engagement of the Indigenous community.
- Lack of a meaningful community advisory structure for validation, feedback, updates, or the development of required accountability measures.
- Limited engagement with First Nations. Further relationship development and engagement will ensure the needs of First Nations communities are reflected within the Plan.
- Insufficient capacity funding to ensure Indigenous organizations and communities may participate in the co-creation of strategies, policies, programs and services.
- Limited socialization of the Plan among Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

To address these challenges, the City has initiated efforts to rebuild relationships with Indigenous service organizations and the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council, while also beginning a review to strengthen the Indigenous Affairs Office and enhance how the City supports the Indigenous community moving forward.

As part of reporting on the Reconciliation Action Plan, City divisions shared key insights from their work with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities in shaping projects, policies, programs, and services. The following four themes capture important lessons—drawn from both City divisions and community leaders—that reinforce existing priorities and will guide the City's next steps.

- **Education:** Educating the public service is a direct response to Call to Action 57 and is essential to advancing the truth of past and present injustices, as well as shining a light on the resiliency and strength of Indigenous communities. For City staff, this learning must extend beyond awareness to action, ensuring engagement with communities is meaningful and reciprocal.
- **Self-Determination and Co-creation:** Plans and frameworks highlighted throughout this report demonstrate that when initiatives are grounded in self-determination and co-creation, they lead to programs and services that are community-led, culturally

appropriate, and holistic. Reconciliation is strongest when Indigenous communities set the direction and the City aligns its systems, resources, and timelines accordingly.

- **Relationship Building:** Building meaningful relationships with community partners and First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities takes time and care, and is integral to ensuring community is centred at all stages of project, policy or process development, establishing trust and ensuring a "nothing about us, without us" approach. Leadership presence is essential to relationship building and demonstrating commitment through action.
- **Capacity Dollars for Community:** Reconciliation requires sustained investment. Indigenous communities need stable funding to participate meaningfully, share expertise, and lead solutions.

These challenges offer opportunities for reflection as the City moves into the next phase of Reconciliation in collaboration with Indigenous peoples, service organizations, and Nations. While Reconciliation cannot follow a one-size-fits-all approach, there is a strong desire for corporate leadership and consistency in directing the policy and procedural changes needed for this work.

Implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan - Report Back - 2022 - 2025

City of Toronto divisions, agencies, and corporations have taken guidance from the Reconciliation Action Plan since its adoption in 2022 to initiate 103 (73%) of the Plan's sub-actions; 3 (2%) of sub-actions are now complete. Planning is underway for 17 (12%) sub-actions, while the remaining 12% has not yet been initiated. This progress is highlighted in Table 1, with a full report of all 28 actions and 141 sub-actions included in Appendix 1 alongside 17 additional directives from City Council.

Table 1: Progress Summary on Reconciliation Action Plan Actions and Sub-Actions

Action Area	Sub-Actions					
	#	Complete	On-Going	In-Progress	Planning Underway	Not Initiated
Actions to Restore Truth	15	1	4	5	2	3
Actions to Right Relations and Share Power	16	1	3	10	1	1
Actions for Justice	77	1	19	33	12	12

Action Area	Sub-Actions					
	#	Complete	On-Going	In-Progress	Planning Underway	Not Initiated
Actions to Make Financial Reparations	15	0	6	8	1	0
Actions for the Indigenous Affairs Office	18	0	8	7	1	2
Totals	141	3	40	63	17	18

Actions to Restore Truth

Truth-telling acknowledges both the strengths and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and the injustices they have faced. It is the first step toward redressing harm.

The Reconciliation Action Plan includes four actions to restore truth. Progress to date includes:

- On August 19, 2022, the Mayor of Toronto offered an apology to the Métis people on behalf of the City of Toronto for its role in contributing to the militarized action against Métis people during the Northwest Resistance of 1885.
- Over half of the Toronto Public Service has attended educational sessions on the history of colonization and its present-day impacts on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities in Toronto. Training content and delivery varied across divisions, with many sessions developed in partnership with Indigenous knowledge keepers, educators or Nations.
- The Purchasing and Materials and Management Division hosted a learning session with Haudenosaunee iron workers, where staff learned about the crucial role these workers played in the construction of major infrastructure in the Greater Toronto Area.
- The Housing Secretariat hosted a training session, where a First Nations owned Architecture company presented on collaborative design processes honoring Indigenous traditions.
- The Municipal Licensing and Standards Division promoted culturally sensitive workplace practices by partnering with an Indigenous Stewardship Circle and encouraging staff to engage in Full Moon Urban Relative Ceremonies, fostering respectful relationships and cultural awareness.

Actions to Right Relations and Share Power

The Reconciliation Action Plan includes four actions to strengthen relationships with First Nations and Indigenous organizations, enhance Indigenous civic engagement, and advocate to other orders of government.

Progress from 2022–2025 includes:

- The Parks and Recreation Division is deepening its engagement with First Nations and urban Indigenous communities to honor their connection to land and water. Advisory Circles, Sharing Circles, workshops, and Community Resource Groups now guide the planning and design of many parks, programs, and facilities. This collaboration strengthens relationships and prioritizes Indigenous placekeeping—such as Indigenous-led design, plantings, ceremonial spaces, and naming parks and community centres to reflect Indigenous stories and language. The Toronto Island Master Plan, developed with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, centers on “Revealing an Indigenous Place.” Indigenous perspectives also inform updates to the Parkland Strategy and Facilities Plan, ensuring Indigenous knowledge is meaningfully integrated. Engagement includes site visits with community members, shaping a new approach that reflects Indigenous guidance for future projects.
- City Clerks introduced measures to reduce barriers for Indigenous candidates for boards and committees, including options for smudging and ceremonial preparation of interview spaces.

Actions for Justice

The City of Toronto is committed to addressing systemic racism and all forms of violence and discrimination against First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples. Improving justice requires holistic interventions that strengthen social determinants of health, including housing, employment, safety, cultural reclamation, and access to land and waters, while ensuring accountability for harm.

The Reconciliation Action Plan includes 11 actions in this area. Progress from 2022–2025 includes:

- In 2023, the Environment, Climate and Forestry Division launched the Indigenous Climate Action Grant to support local Indigenous projects addressing the climate crisis. Grant applications are reviewed by an Indigenous Review Committee consisting of six community members representing diverse First Nations and Métis communities with an Elder serving as co-facilitator of the process.
- In 2023, Toronto Public Health launched an Indigenous Cultural Safety Action Plan across all programs, services, and policy development activities, aimed at promoting knowledge and understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing.
- The City of Toronto has implemented a process to address concerns about offensive Indigenous imagery, demonstrated by the removal of the former City of Etobicoke’s Coat of Arms from the Etobicoke Civic Centre. Following public and staff concern

and consultation with the Human Rights and Indigenous Affairs Offices, the City determined the imagery conflicted with its Reconciliation and inclusion commitments.

Actions to Make Financial Reparations

Collaborating with Indigenous organizations and communities to ensure economic prosperity for Indigenous Peoples requires a multi-faceted approach that includes expanding educational supports and training opportunities, increasing employment and leadership roles, incentivizing procurement with Indigenous businesses, strengthening capacity-building frameworks for Indigenous-led organizations, and ensuring First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities are meaningfully included in City infrastructure and development projects.

Four actions in the Reconciliation Action Plan guide how the City of Toronto will make financial reparations to Indigenous communities. Since 2022, the following initiatives have worked towards these actions:

- The Purchasing and Materials Management Division has developed a five-year plan to guide the co-creation of a First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Procurement Policy to address the disproportionate challenges Indigenous businesses face in providing goods and services to the City.
- Museums and Heritage Services has increased access to land and space for food programming by creating an Indigenous kitchen garden at Spadina Museum, providing opportunities for skills training, improving the supply of traditional Indigenous food to community kitchens, and promoting food sovereignty in an Indigenized space.

Actions for the Indigenous Affairs Office

The Indigenous Affairs Office supports City divisions in working with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities by advocating for Indigenous Peoples, strengthening engagement, improving communication, and building internal capacity.

The Reconciliation Action Plan includes five actions that were developed to guide the work of the Indigenous Affairs Office. Since 2022, highlights of this work include:

- Development of the Indigenous Affairs Community of Practice, which supports the Toronto Public Service with interdivisional information sharing, collaboration, and innovation to support and enhance the City's work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples.
- Interdivisional collaboration on the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Initiative, which includes Reconciliation projects that support Indigenous cultural revitalization, development of affordable rental housing, and economic development initiatives along the City's waterfront. This work includes the recent re-naming initiative of Ookwemin Minising (formally known as Villiers Island).

- In adopting the Reconciliation Action Plan, Toronto City Council directed the Indigenous Affairs Office to undertake engagement to determine a different name for the Plan and appropriate ceremony to mark the beginning of its implementation. Ceremony is viewed as a shared responsibility for Indigenous peoples, and although the Reconciliation Action Plan was influenced by Elders, Knowledge Keepers and youth, the Plan has not been Indigenous-led and important concerns remain. Further work is required by the City to acknowledge missteps in development and implementation and to repair relationships in order to determine the relationships community wants with the Plan moving forward, and whether a new name and ceremony are appropriate.

A comprehensive listing of actions taken to address the commitments made in the Reconciliation Action Plan can be found in Appendix 1.

Strengthening the Path Forward

The Reconciliation Action Plan was intended as a living document, evolving through ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and co-creation with Indigenous communities. Next steps must be grounded on the truth of limited co-creation opportunities for Indigenous self-determination and lessons learned from strong community partners like the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council, its members and divisions working in deep collaboration and mutual understanding.

Important work is underway in this direction. The City's Senior Leadership Team has identified 'Strengthening Indigenous Relations' as a strategic priority, and several key initiatives have already been launched:

- The Indigenous Affairs Office is now embedded in the Community Development and Social Services service area, and the Deputy City Manager has begun work internally and with community partners to reimagine the Indigenous Affairs Office and its role for greater impact, clarity and partnership.
- City Clerk's Office, the City Manager's Office and the Deputy City Manager's Office are actively working with the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee to develop a new Terms of Reference and structure that can work better for community leadership and political engagement.
- The City is addressing the longstanding underfunding of the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC) with increased funding for capacity building, engagement and support of City projects, as demonstrated in recommendation number three of this report.
- Planning is also underway with TASSC to establish a co-convened structure to support City-community collaboration that moves towards authentic relationships and sustained collaborations, advancing Indigenous community priorities.
- Further steps are being taken to increase staff understanding, capacity and accountability in working with First Nations, and developing a coordinated enterprise

approach of work with Indigenous communities with a view to strengthen collaborative practices.

These stronger pathways for collaboration, reciprocal dialogue, and accountability that are both consistent and transparent, will enable the City to strengthen its Reconciliation efforts.

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Actions and Sub-Actions Taken by City Divisions
Appendix 2: Actions Taken by City of Toronto Agencies and Corporations