

NOTICE OF MOTION

Authorization to Release Section 37 Funds to Support Indigenous Placekeeping in Allan Gardens

Moved by: Councillor

Moise

Seconded by: Councillor

Bravo

SUMMARY:

This Motion seeks authorization to release Section 37 community benefits funds, in the amount of \$350,000, to support Indigenous placekeeping capital improvements in Allan Gardens. A portion of this funding will be allocated to the Friends of Allan Gardens to support engagement with relevant Indigenous communities and organizations in collaboration with City staff and relevant partners. These groups will be actively engaged in co-stewardship and the co-development of a long-term vision and will select a community-identified name for the project, replacing the placeholder name included in this motion.

Allan Gardens is a historical and contemporary gathering place for many Indigenous peoples and organizations. This significance is noted in the Toronto City Council-endorsed "[Growing with the City: An Ecosystem of Initiatives in Allan Gardens](#)". Since 2022, a Sacred Fire has been burning in Allan Gardens as a living site of mourning, healing, and ceremony, maintained by Fire Keepers — Indigenous community members who tend a Fire of Mourning in recognition of each child whose remains have been recovered from the grounds of former residential schools across Canada.

Friends of Allan Gardens has an established role in park stewardship and community programming at Allan Gardens. This Motion provides a clearer path for Friends of Allan Gardens to support inclusive engagement on the future of Indigenous placekeeping in Allan Gardens, while ensuring the City retains appropriate oversight for funding, agreements, capital improvements, and reporting back to Council.

The proposed funding will support engagement and planning in a manner that recognizes Indigenous self-determination, and the City's commitments under the Reconciliation Action Plan. The intent is to ensure that future site improvements are informed by community input, operational feasibility, and clear City accountability.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. City Council amend the 2026–2035 Capital Budget and Plan for Parks and Recreation to create a placeholder project titled Indigenous Placekeeping in Allan Gardens with a cost and cash flow of \$350,000 gross and \$0 debt in 2026, fully funded by Section 37 community benefits obtained from 244-262 Church Street (Source account: XR3026-3701313) for local area streetscape and park improvements in the Ward;
2. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, to allocate \$75,000 of the funds described in Recommendation 1 to Friends of Allan Gardens to support community engagement and related coordination for the Indigenous Placekeeping in Allan Gardens project, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.
3. City Council authorize the Deputy City Manager, Community Development and Social Services, in consultation with the Director, Indigenous Affairs and the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, to negotiate, enter into, and execute, on behalf of the City, any agreements required to support engagement, planning, and capital improvements for Indigenous Placekeeping in Allan Gardens, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Deputy City Manager, Community Development and Social Services, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.
4. City Council request the Deputy City Manager, Community Development and Social Services, in consultation with the Director, Indigenous Affairs, and the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, to report back in Q2 2027 on the use of the funds and progress on the Indigenous Placekeeping in Allan Gardens project, including:
 - a. Progress on engagement, planning, and any capital improvements.
 - b. A summary of engagement undertaken with Indigenous communities, organizations, Friends of Allan Gardens, and other relevant stakeholders.
 - c. How the work aligns with and advances the City of Toronto's Reconciliation Action Plan (2022–2032).
 - d. Any requests for additional funding that may be required to realize the vision articulated by the Indigenous community for placekeeping initiatives in Allan Gardens.