

To: Council in Committee of the Whole

From: Paul Ralph, Chief Administrative Officer,  
Office of the C.A.O.

Report Number: CNCL-22-48

Date of Report: June 16, 2022

Date of Meeting: June 20, 2022

Subject: Response to the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Calls to Action  
and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous  
Peoples (UNDRIP)

Ward: All Wards

File: 03-05

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## **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide City Council with background information on the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission \(TRC\) Calls to Action](#) and the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#) and to seek Council recognition and acknowledgement of these two documents as the framework for reconciliation in Oshawa.

Attachment 1 is a list of the actions taken and underway by the City of Oshawa related to various TRC Calls to Action.

## **2.0 Recommendation**

It is recommended to City Council:

1. That pursuant to CNCL-22-48, dated June 16, 2022, City Council acknowledge and recognize the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and,
2. City Council commit to meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous communities and direct staff to investigate, propose and initiate a process to develop a Reconciliation Strategy and Action Plan and to utilize the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for the City's Reconciliation efforts and report back to Council; and,

3. That a copy of this report be sent to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Oshawa Durham Métis Council and Bawaajigewan Aboriginal Advisory Circle.

### **3.0 Executive Summary**

N/A

### **4.0 Input From Other Sources**

The following have provided input into this report:

- Community Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee
- Corporate Leadership Team

### **5.0 Analysis**

#### **5.1 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)**

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada was established as a result of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement agreement in 2008. It was intended to reveal to Canadians the complex truth about the history and ongoing legacy of the residential school system and to guide and inspire a process of healing and reconciliation between Indigenous families and non-Indigenous communities, governments, churches, private sector and Canadian residents.

The Commission spent six years travelling across the country to hear the stories of survivors and their families. The Commission heard from more than 6,500 people.

On June 2, 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its 6-volume final report which includes the 94 Calls to Action. These reports can be accessed on the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation website.

##### **5.1.1 TRC Principles of Reconciliation**

The following Principles of Reconciliation were outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report:

1. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.
2. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have Treaty, constitutional, and human rights that must be recognized and respected.
3. Reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.

4. Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.
5. Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
6. All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.
7. The perspectives and understandings of Aboriginal Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers of the ethics, concepts, and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation.
8. Supporting Aboriginal peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.
9. Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources.
10. Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society

### **5.1.2 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action**

The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission includes 94 Calls to Action to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation.

The 94 Calls to Action are addressed primarily to the federal, provincial and territorial governments but also to municipal governments, the corporate sector and the broader Canadian society. They cover a wide range of government responsibilities, including child welfare, education, language and culture, health, justice, commemoration, museums and archives, training for public servants, and a number of specific initiatives related to reconciliation. There are eight recommendations that are addressed to "all levels of government", and an additional five that specifically refer to municipal governments.

It's important to note that the City of Oshawa can respond and contribute to many of the Calls to Action, beyond the actions directed to "all levels of government" or "municipal governments" and therefore, the specific actions directed to government are not outlined in this report.

It is recommended that members of Council and all staff familiarize themselves with all 94 Calls to Action.

## 5.2 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on September 13, 2007. Canada endorsed UNDRIP in 2016.

UNDRIP is a document that describes both individual and collective rights of Indigenous peoples around the world. It offers guidance on cooperative relationships with Indigenous peoples based on the principles of equality, partnership, good faith, and mutual respect.

UNDRIP addresses the rights of Indigenous peoples on issues such as culture, identity, religion, language, health, education, and community.

On June 21, 2021 the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* received Royal Assent through the Government of Canada. This Act provides a roadmap for the Government of Canada and Indigenous Peoples to work together to implement the Declaration based on lasting reconciliation, healing and cooperative relations.

Call to Action #43 in the TRC Calls to Action states: “We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.”

## 5.3 Acknowledgment and Recognition of the TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP

In 2016, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities produced “Pathways to Reconciliation” as a Guide to municipalities on the TRC report. In this document, FCM states, “All Canadians and all orders of government have a role to play in reconciliation. Although most of the Calls to Action require federal, provincial and territorial government leadership, it is appropriate for municipal governments to support reconciliation”.

In 2021, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) produced “Resources on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action.

Several other municipalities across Canada have formally acknowledged recognized the TRC Calls to Action and/or UNDRIP.

In its meeting of November 24, 2021, the Community Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (C.D.E.I.C.) passed the following motion, “That the C.D.E.I.C. recommend that the City of Oshawa in consultation with the people of Oshawa, develop and implement strategies in line with the 94 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

In response to this recommendation from the C.D.E.I.C., the City included the following item in the 2022 Office of the C.A.O. Department Business Plan: “Investigate, propose and initiate a process to develop a Reconciliation Strategy and Action Plan in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.”

Acknowledgement, recognition and commitment to the TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP is an important first step in Oshawa's reconciliation journey, and in the development of a Reconciliation Strategy and Action Plan.

## **5.4 Oshawa's Context**

### **5.4.1 Oshawa's Indigenous Population**

According to the 2016 Census, the City of Oshawa is the home to the highest number of people identifying as Indigenous across the Region of Durham, at 8,965 individuals or 2.4% of Oshawa's population. The results from the 2021 Census around Indigenous identity have not yet been released, but it's expected that these numbers will increase.

Stats Canada indicates that Indigenous peoples are the fastest growing population in Canada, with a population that grew by 42.5% between 2006 and 2016. This growth rate is more than four times that of non-Indigenous populations.

### **5.4.1 Actions Taken and Underway in the City of Oshawa**

The City of Oshawa has taken several actions over the past few years as it relates to the TRC Calls to Action.

Attachment 1 outlines the actions taken and underway by the City of Oshawa. One action item of particular note is the establishment of an Indigenous Relations Advisor staff position. This formation of this position is underway, in consultation with Indigenous communities and it is expected that recruitment will commence this fall.

It's important to note that in order for a meaningful response to the TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP, relationship building and community engagement with Indigenous communities is vital and will take time and intentional effort by all members of Council and City staff.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

## 7.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan

The recommendations in this report respond to the Strategic Goals of Accountable Leadership, Developing and Leveraging Relationships by improving Indigenous-municipal relationships and working with Indigenous communities and Social Equity by enriching our community through diversity.



Julie Maclsaac, Director,  
Innovation & Transformation



Paul Ralph, Chief Administrative Officer,  
Office of the C.A.O.

**Actions taken or underway by the City of Oshawa related to various Calls to Action**

#	TRC Call to Action	City Actions Taken	City Actions Underway
3	Fully implement Jordan's Principle to ensure First Nations children are not denied or delayed in accessing essential public services.	The City of Oshawa developed an Equity and Inclusion Lens in 2021 to guide staff in the equitable and inclusive development of programs, policies and services.	
43	Fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.	The 2022 Office of the C.A.O. Department Business Plan includes an item to "Investigate, propose and initiate a process to develop a Reconciliation Strategy and Action Plan in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action."	City Council is considering CNCL-22-48 in June 2022 to acknowledge and recognize the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and utilize it as the framework for the City's reconciliation efforts.
45 iii	Renew or establish Treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for maintaining those relationships into the future.	<p>In 2013, City Council provided a lower tax rate (single residential rate versus multi-residential rate) to the Nishnawbe housing development at 109 Park Road South, for a period of 20 years.</p> <p>In 2018, City Council made a unanimous decision to change the street name which was derogatory and offensive toward Indigenous Peoples.</p> <p>City staff continue to develop relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities through participation at Durham Region Aboriginal Advisory Circle.</p> <p>A land acknowledgement was added to the Regular Council meetings, official ceremonies and media events in 2018.</p> <p>City Council made budget commitment for an Indigenous Relations Advisor position through the 2022 Budget.</p> <p>City Council directed staff to consult with indigenous communities in Oshawa to investigate the need and opportunity to provide shared or</p>	<p>The City is continuing to foster relationships with Indigenous communities that have treaty rights and assertions within the boundaries of the City of Oshawa.</p> <p>The City is working to build relationships in order to consult meaningfully with Indigenous communities on the following directives of Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including Annishabemowin on facility signage</li> <li>• Augmentation of the City's Land Acknowledgment</li> </ul>

#	TRC Call to Action	City Actions Taken	City Actions Underway
		<p>dedicated space within the proposed north west Oshawa community centre for use by local indigenous communities.</p> <p>Partnered on the Honouring Murdered and Missing Indigenous Peoples event on May 5, 2022.</p>	
57	<p>Provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Indigenous Rights, Indigenous law and Indigenous-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism.</p>	<p>The City partnered with Trent University and the First Peoples School to bring Indigenous Cultural Training sessions to City staff starting in 2019. To date, approximately 300 staff have taken this impactful training. These sessions paused during the pandemic.</p>	<p>Interactive Indigenous Cultural Training sessions will resume in 2022.</p>
66	<p>Establish funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation.</p>	<p>The City modified its Grant program in 2022, and includes a stream “Strong Inclusive Communities” in which is focused on grants toward organizations providing support to diverse communities, including Indigenous peoples and communities.</p>	



#	TRC Call to Action	City Actions Taken	City Actions Underway
79 iii	Develop and implement plans and strategies to commemorate residential school sites, the history of residential schools and contributions of Indigenous peoples to Canada's history.	<p>The City partnered with Bawaajigewan Aboriginal Community Circle in 2020 on a virtual celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day event.</p> <p>The City partnered with Bawaajigewan Aboriginal Community Circle in 2021 on the Orange Ribbon honouring of the children sent to residential schools and their families.</p> <p>The City paused Canada Day celebrations in 2021, and encouraged the community to reflect and learn about Canada's historic and present day relations with Indigenous peoples.</p> <p>The City has commemorated and continues to commemorate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June as Indigenous History Month</li> <li>• June 21 as Indigenous Peoples Day</li> <li>• September 30 as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation</li> <li>• Treaty Week – first week of November</li> </ul> <p>In 2022, the City garden at King &amp; Queen Streets will bloom in orange and display the Every Child Matters flag, as a commemoration to the children who endured residential schools, their families and their communities.</p>	<p>The City is investigating and working in consultation with Indigenous communities in the following directives of City Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential re-naming of Bagot Street</li> <li>• Installation of an Orange Crosswalk</li> </ul>