

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 2019 September 24

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

**FILE:** 2155 01

**SUBJECT:** TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF CANADA –  
UPDATE ON ‘CALLS TO ACTION’ FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**PURPOSE:** To provide the Committee with an update on implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action for local governments.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** the Committee request Council to approve an annual expenditure of up to \$10,000 from the Boards, Committees and Commissions budget in order to fund reconciliation focussed protocol related activities, as detailed in *Section 5.2* of this report.
2. **THAT** the Committee request Council to authorize staff to pursue the approach and process regarding acknowledging Indigenous territory in written documents as outlined in *Section 5.3* of this report.
3. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Environment and Social Planning Committee and the Community Heritage Commission for information.

**REPORT****1.0 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN BURNABY**

Burnaby is located on the ancestral, unceded, and shared Coast Salish territory of hə́nqəmínəḥ and Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh speaking peoples. According to the 2016 National Census, approximately 4,195 individuals living in Burnaby self-identified as being Aboriginal. This accounts for approximately 1.8% of the total city population. Based on enrollment information from the Burnaby School District, the Burnaby neighbourhoods with the highest percentage of Indigenous families are the Heights, Edmonds, Cameron, and Stride.

**2.0 RECONCILIATION BACKGROUND**

In 2016 September, Council received a report providing background and context relating to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) final report *Honouring the Truth – Reconciling for the Future*, and the contained ‘Calls to Action’ for local government. Since that time, staff have been working to initiate relationships with local Nations, including commissioning research regarding ancestral and ongoing Indigenous presence on this land,

hiring Indigenous Educators (at Burnaby Village Museum), and developing appropriate language for territory acknowledgement. As the Executive Committee of Council Terms of Reference has recently been updated to include oversight of corporate reconciliation efforts, it is an appropriate time to bring forward an update of activities.

### 3.0 POLICY SECTION

The City of Burnaby efforts to implement the ‘Calls to Action’ are supported by the following Council-adopted policies:

- Equity Policy, approved by Council in 1994, which states that “The City has a duty to its citizens to set a positive example and foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect”;
- Burnaby Social Sustainability Strategy, approved by Council in 2011, includes a primary goal of ‘Community Inclusion’. This goal is particularly concerned with ensuring the City is “welcoming of all cultures, identities and abilities”, and focuses on “principles of economic and social security and justice”; and the
- Goals and sub-goals of the Corporate Strategic Plan through:
  - An Inclusive Community
    - Celebrate diversity –  
Create more opportunities for the community to celebrate diversity
    - Serve a diverse community –  
Ensure City services fully meet the needs of our dynamic community
    - Create a sense of community –  
Provide opportunities that encourage and welcome all community members and create a sense of belonging
  - A Thriving Organization
    - Organizational culture –  
Ensure that our core values are reflected in our policies, programs and service delivery

### 4.0 TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF CANADA

The mandate for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) is outlined in *Schedule N* of the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (2007)*, which is the agreement reached between former residential school students, the involved Churches<sup>1</sup>, the Assembly of First Nations, other Aboriginal organizations, and the Government of Canada.

Beginning in the 1870’s, approximately 150,000 Indigenous children were removed and separated from their families and communities to attend residential schools. While most of the 139 residential schools ceased to operate by the mid-1970s, the last federally-run school closed in 1996.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Specifically: The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church of Canada, the United Church of Canada, and Roman Catholic Entities.

<sup>2</sup> The last operational Residential School was Gordon Residential School in Punnichy, Saskatchewan.

Commissioners of the TRC spent six years travelling to all parts of Canada to hear from Indigenous people who had been taken from their families as children, often by force, and placed for much of their childhoods in residential schools. What they heard regarding the ongoing impacts felt by Indigenous individuals and communities of the abuse, neglect and cultural genocide experienced in these residential schools is contained in the Commission’s final report *Honouring the Truth – Reconciling for the Future*<sup>3</sup> (2015 December). The report also contains a series of 94 ‘Calls to Action for Reconciliation’, which are directed towards all parties of the Agreement as well as to individuals, community institutions, and all levels of government including local government.

As part of its work, in 2015 the TRC established the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation housed at the University of Manitoba. This Centre fulfills the TRC’s commitment to establish a national research centre on reconciliation and also is a permanent repository and archive for the statements, documents and other materials the TRC gathered over its years of operation and for ongoing related documents.

#### 4.1 Calls to Action for Local Governments

The ‘Calls to Action’ included in the final report of the TRC are divided into two categories: legacy (Actions #1 to #42) and reconciliation (Actions #43 to #94.). The ‘legacy’ actions include sections on Child Welfare, Education, Language and Culture, Health, and Justice. The ‘reconciliation’ actions include sections relating to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*<sup>4</sup>; equity for Indigenous peoples in the legal system; professional development and training for public servants; education; relationships with faith institutions; youth; museums and archives; missing children and women; sports; business; and immigration. These actions also provide direction to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to continue its research and cataloguing activities.

As mentioned above, the ‘Calls to Action’ speak not only to parties of the Agreement but also to other levels of governments, including local government, and to community institutions and individual Canadians. The eight actions that specifically name municipal governments or which refer to ‘all levels of government’ in areas of local government jurisdiction/involvement are excerpted below:

- **#43)** We call upon all levels of government to recognize the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a framework for reconciliation.
- **#47)** We call upon all levels of government to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands.
- **#55)** We call upon all levels of government to provide annual reports and/or any current relevant data to the National Centre for Reconciliation

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<sup>3</sup> A full copy of the report can be found at: <http://nctr.ca/reports.php>

<sup>4</sup> The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*<sup>4</sup> was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 and recognises the wide range of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of Indigenous peoples. In particular, the Declaration highlights the requirement for prior and informed consultation, participation and consent for activities of any kind that impact Indigenous peoples.

- **#57)** We call upon all levels of governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.
- **#75)** We call upon all levels of government, as applicable, to develop and implement strategies and procedures for the ongoing protection of residential school cemeteries. This includes the provision of appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased children.
- **#77)** We call upon the archives of all levels of government to work collaboratively with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to identify and collect copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system.
- **#87)** We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Indigenous peoples, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organizations, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history.
- **#88)** We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth and continued support for North American Indigenous Games.

An update of staff work to-date to implement the above ‘Calls to Action’ is summarized below.

## **5.0 RECONCILIATION EFFORTS IN BURNABY**

To date City efforts towards reconciliation include:

- Participation in the development of the Burnaby School District’s most recent ‘Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement’ (approved 2014 November). The City is a signatory to this Agreement as a ‘Community Witness’.
- Burnaby Village Museum has/is:
  - developed an ‘Indigenous History in Burnaby Resource Guide’ in collaboration with local Nations (in process);
  - created an Indigenous Learning House and Matriarch’s Garden on Museum grounds;
  - hired five local Indigenous Educators<sup>5</sup> who offer on-site programming;
  - updated school programs to reflect Indigenous content;
  - organizing a free ‘Indigenous Learning Week’ at the Museum for Burnaby students and teachers to learn from Indigenous educators and knowledge keepers; and,
  - working with the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish and Kwantlen Nations to develop programs, provide opportunities for cultural presenters and performers, and collaborate on historical research together.
- City Archives responded to Call #77 noted above and completed a submission of relevant records to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. All new transfers and donations to the Archives are also examined with Call #77 in mind.
- Human Resources has hosted staff learning opportunities in 2018/2019. As well, the ongoing observance of Orange Shirt Day<sup>6</sup> was initiated in 2018.

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<sup>5</sup> The positions created are casual and contract based.

- Burnaby Public Library has/is:
  - continued to expand its collection of Indigenous materials;
  - increased Indigenous content in Library programming including author readings, related book club discussions etc. that recognize the importance of the oral tradition; and,
  - acting on the Canadian Federation of Library Associations Indigenous Matters Committee.
- Burnaby City Council has/is:
  - issued a proclamation recognizing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*;
  - developing corporate Indigenous territory acknowledgement language and an annual updating process;
  - proclaiming and recognizing (since 2014) June 21st as ‘National Indigenous Peoples Day’, the federally designated ‘day’ recognizing and celebrating the many accomplishments and contributions of Indigenous peoples; and,
  - supporting and advertising National Indigenous Peoples day activities in Burnaby, with corporate leadership from Burnaby Public Library.
- Burnaby Art Gallery has/is:
  - developed School and Public Programs that incorporate and feature Indigenous content (e.g. Coastal Waters, an outreach program which features the work of Coast Salish artist John Marsden);
  - committed to host at least one exhibit a year with Indigenous content and/or that is guest curated by an Indigenous Curator;
  - developed a partnership with the Salish Weave Collection, a philanthropic initiative that promotes awareness of contemporary Coast Salish art and artists;
  - expanding the diversity represented within the City of Burnaby’s Permanent Art Collection;
  - commissioning public art by local Indigenous artists; and,
  - working to repatriate decommissioned totem poles in the City’s possession.

## 5.1 Additional Reconciliation Efforts

Building upon these initiatives, the following areas of work have been identified by relevant City Departments:

- A collaborative research project, through the Community Heritage Commission and with local Nations, to identify landscapes, stories and places for commemoration and recognition.
- Revising the Burnaby ‘Charting Change’ Historical Atlas in consultation with local Nations to more fully represent Indigenous presence, based on the content of the ‘Indigenous History in Burnaby’ Resource Guide.

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<sup>6</sup> Orange Shirt Day is observed on September 30 every year to raise awareness, acknowledge and maintain open discussion about the legacy of residential schools in Canada and the reconciliation process.

- Identifying and developing inventory archeological records and artifacts in the City’s collections, or that are generated or accessed within Burnaby, including developing an appropriate process for sharing access to this information when possible.
- An expanded staff training program, including:
  - indigenous content included in staff ‘on boarding’ hiring packages;
  - formal training opportunities offered through Believe and Achieve or other mechanisms;
  - expanded resources for online training; and,
  - annual organized visits to the Burnaby Village Museum ‘Indigenous Learning House’.
- ‘Printing of the ‘Indigenous History in Burnaby’ Resource Guide referenced above (commissioned by Burnaby Village Museum) with hard copies made available to the public via distribution at Burnaby Public Library Branches and at City Hall. A copy will also be provided to each Burnaby Public Library Branch and to each Burnaby School District School Library for inclusion in their permanent collection.
- Formalization of the City’s support for community-based National Indigenous Day (June 21) events and activities.
- Acknowledging Indigenous territory in a prominent place on the City website.
- Furthering Indigenous representation and inclusion in regular City recreation and culture programming.

Staff are developing these opportunities within the City’s existing programs and initiatives and will explicitly seek to collaborate, partner, contract and/or hire indigenous persons to create and/or implement as possible. As required, separate subsequent reports will be brought forward to Council containing implementation details for approval and corresponding budget requests.

## 5.2 Reconciliation Focused Protocol Activities

Many of the initiatives and processes noted above require staff to engage directly with representatives of local Nations, on behalf of Council and as representatives of the City of Burnaby. Some of these interactions, particularly those that involve communicating with Councils of local Nations and with Elders, involve the observance of certain protocols.

Protocols vary by Nation, although generally are either relational or tangible. Relational protocols include acknowledging traditional and ancestral territory, reframing civic history and public documents to recognize local Nations, and sharing teaching documents or other developed resources (as possible) in gestures of reciprocity. Tangible protocols include providing refreshments at meetings or conversations, covering transportation costs (i.e. transit tickets or gas cards) for Elders or other dignitaries attending civic functions, the presentation of ceremonial gifts (e.g. blankets, civic memorabilia), and offering honorariums to members of Nations for events or meeting attendance. This is particularly important when working with Elders as many of the individuals in question live with low incomes.

Respecting these protocols also contributes to the building of respectful relationships, and demonstrates the City’s commitment to reconciliation. As such, it is proposed that an annual

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From: Director Planning and Building  
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expenditure of up to \$10,000 be approved from the Boards, Committees and Commissions budget in order to fund reconciliation focussed, protocol related activities. It is intended that these funds would support the further development of reconciliation-based relationships with local Nations until such time that they can be incorporated into the appropriate regular operating budgets.

### **5.3 Territory Acknowledgement in Written Documents**

At its meeting of 2019 June 24, Burnaby City Council approved a report regarding corporate guidelines for Indigenous territory acknowledgement. Since that time, staff have been working to implement the guidelines, and accompanying process, across the city.

To continue with this work it is proposed a territory acknowledgement also be included within written City documents. Phrasing is proposed below based on the previously approved verbal acknowledgement. This phrasing may need to be slightly adjusted depending on the document in question. The lower case letters are deliberate:

*We recognize that Burnaby is located on the ancestral and unceded homelands of the Skwxwú7mesh and hənq̓əminəm speaking peoples, and we are grateful to be on this shared territory.*

It is noted that Burnaby City Council already includes a written territory acknowledgement in the minutes of its meetings, and in the minutes of Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission meetings and other Committee meetings of Council. To follow this example, it is proposed that a written territory acknowledgement statement should be included in the following instances:

- In meeting minutes where the acknowledgement is verbally offered;
- At the beginning of important, publicly-available, strategic City documents (e.g. forthcoming Community Safety Plan, any future updates of City Sustainability Plans);
- Public Consultation resources, documents, and materials for all processes across the City;
- Future updates or iterations of Community Plans, including the Official Community Plan;
- Public Educational and/or Historical Resources; and,
- Other public documents at the discretion of staff.

As with the oral acknowledgement, it is suggested that the above undergo an annual review so that the evolving understandings and knowledge of staff regarding territory acknowledgements can be reflected. Social Planning and Burnaby Village Museum staff can undertake this process.

### **6.0 NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGNEOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

Action #41 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Final Report calls upon the federal government, in consultation with Indigenous organizations, to appoint a public inquiry into the causes of, and remedies for, the disproportionate victimization of Indigenous women and girls. In 2016, the federal government established 'The National Inquiry into Missing and

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Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls’ as a public inquiry under *Part I* of the federal *Inquiries Act*.

The National Inquiry released its final report in 2019 May<sup>7</sup>, which includes ‘Calls for Justice’ directed towards all levels of government, including local government, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other policing services in Canada, other public institutions, and individual Canadians. Staff are working to prepare an overview report for Council on the ‘calls for justice’ directed towards local government.

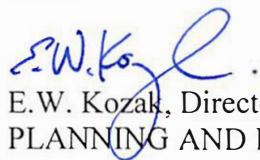
## 7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On 2015 December 15, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its final report, *Honouring the Truth – Reconciling for the Future*. The report contains 94 ‘Calls to Action for Reconciliation’. The Actions are directed towards individuals, other community institutions, and all levels of government including local government. More specifically, there are seven actions that specifically name municipal governments or which refer to ‘all levels of government’ in areas of local government jurisdiction/involvement. This report provides an update on efforts to date to meet the ‘Calls to Action’ for local government. Staff will continue to keep the Committee and Council apprised.

To support these efforts it is recommended that the Committee request Council to approve an annual expenditure of up to \$10,000 from the Boards, Committees and Commissions budget in order to fund reconciliation focused protocol related activities, as detailed in *Section 5.2* of this report.

It is also recommended that the Committee request Council to authorize staff to pursue the approach and process regarding acknowledging Indigenous territory in written documents as outlined in *Section 5.3* of this report

Finally, it is recommended that a copy of this report be forwarded to the Environment and Social Planning Committee and the Community Heritage Commission for information.



E.W. Kozak, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

RM:sa

cc: City Manager  
Director Corporate Services  
Director Public Safety and Community Services  
Director Engineering  
Director Human Resources  
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Chief Librarian  
City Solicitor  
City Clerk  
Museum Service Supervisor  
City Archivist

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<sup>7</sup> A full copy of the report can be found at: [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/)