

Priorities Committee Meeting_Jun21_2022

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND UPDATE**Indigenous Initiative Update****Report Purpose**

To provide Priorities Committee with an update on the Indigenous initiatives as identified by Council on July 6, 2021.

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals

Goal 1 - Build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents

Goal 5 - Foster collaboration through regional, community and governmental partnerships

Report

On July 6, 2021, Council directed Administration to implement three specific actions to further develop organizational capacity in Indigenous relations and to honour those affected by the residential school system. This included hiring an Indigenous relations professional, developing an Indigenous education and training program, and exploring a memorial to honour those affected by residential schools. This report aims to update the committee on the progress-to-date of these three actions and to communicate additional next steps.

Indigenous Relations Professional

Following the Council motion, Intergovernmental Affairs, in partnership with the Chief Commissioner's Office and Human Resources, developed a job description and hired a full-time, permanent Indigenous Relations Advisor position. Reporting to the Manager, Intergovernmental Affairs, this position is responsible for leading a corporate-wide approach to Indigenous Relations for Strathcona County.

Tasks assigned to the Indigenous Relations Advisor include establishing relationships at the government-to-government level with First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta, advising on Indigenous engagements/consultations, leading the internal Indigenous Relations Working Group, establishing/leading an external Indigenous Advisory Committee, coordinating cross-departmental initiatives, and identifying priority initiatives to advance good relations with Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Education and Training Program

Following direction from Council, Administration began to identify potential vendors to deliver an Indigenous Peoples, History, and Intercultural Relations Employee Training program. In February 2022, the County issued a request for information to gather more information on the types of training providers, options for course delivery, and proposed content. Following the evaluation of these responses, three vendors were identified as potential candidates and a request for quotation was issued. At present, the County intends to select a vendor and finalize the training course within Q3. All employee training is targeted to commence in Q4 2022. This course will also be offered to all elected officials.

The Indigenous Peoples, History, and Intercultural Relations Employee Training will directly fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #57 as it will include the history and legacy of residential schools, information on the United Nations Declaration on

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the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, Aboriginal–Crown relations, and other key intercultural competencies and skills.

Administration has identified and continues to communicate other Indigenous educational opportunities for all staff, including openly accessible course offerings at the University of Alberta and NorQuest College. Council will also be participating in a cultural education session at Métis Crossing in July 2022 with elected officials from three neighbouring municipalities.

Residential School Memorial

Administration is currently exploring options to recognize and honour the legacy of the residential school system and to celebrate Indigenous culture and identity. In the short to medium term, two temporary art installations will reflect on the impact of residential schools and will highlight Indigenous culture and resiliency. Administration is also engaging Indigenous communities to identify the best way to proceed with a permanent memorial, including identifying what type of memorial is appropriate. This approach allows the County to acknowledge the urgency and necessity of honouring those impacted by the residential school system while providing Indigenous communities time to determine the best approach forward.

The temporary art installation project was identified as a first step as it enables the County to forge new relationships with Indigenous artists by having conversations regarding the impact of the residential school system. Recreation, Parks, and Culture began by establishing an informal advisory circle of Elders and Indigenous artists to identify the scope of the project and to develop a Request for Expression of Interest (RFEOI). From this RFEOI, the County and advisors selected both Métis Artist Heather Shillinglaw and Alexis Nakota Sioux First Nation artist Eugene Alexis for temporary visual art projects.

A temporary installation of four artworks by Heather Shillinglaw will be installed in the Community Centre from approximately September 12, 2022, to January 13, 2023. It is anticipated this work will be formally unveiled on September 30th, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Eugene Alexis will be creating a painting which will be copied onto a larger format vinyl and installed as an exterior mural on the Sherwood Park Arena. The artist is expected to complete the artwork in August 2022 and the mural will be installed in 2023.

Once Intergovernmental Affairs establishes an Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC), Administration will work with the committee to identify potential options for a permanent memorial. Dependent on the direction from the IAC, Administration will develop options for the memorial and provide these to Council in Spring 2023, including clear project timelines and costs.

Additional detail on the temporary and permanent memorial projects, including images, can be found in Enclosure 1.

Upcoming Initiatives

Intergovernmental Affairs is in the process of establishing an administrative Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC). This 8-person committee will provide a channel for Indigenous peoples of the County to directly provide Administration with advice on advancing Reconciliation efforts in Strathcona County. Administration is in the process of reviewing

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responses to the call for members and conducting interviews with applicants. Those selected for the IAC will be notified and the first meeting of the committee will be scheduled in late-summer to early-fall 2022, depending on the availability of members.

One of the main initiatives for the IAC will be to provide advice on the development of a broader County Indigenous relations strategy or framework. The aim of this strategy will clarify the County's approach to working with Indigenous peoples, First Nations and Métis communities, and other Indigenous organizations. This type of guiding document will be applicable to all departments in the County and will support the County's strategic plan priority to further Indigenous relations that advance reconciliation.

Intergovernmental Affairs is in the process of establishing new relationships with First Nations and exploring the formal creation of government-to-government partnerships with First Nations and the Metis Nation of Alberta. The intention is, if there is mutual interest from both parties, to establish a formal relationship through agreements or Memoranda of Understandings.

Council and Committee History

July 6, 2021 THAT an Indigenous Relations Professional position be approved with funding provided from the current Senior Administration budget until the end of 2021, and future funding for the position to be addressed through the 2022 budget process: and

 THAT Administration work with Indigenous leaders, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers to develop an Indigenous Education and Training Program for all Strathcona County elected officials and staff; and

 THAT Administration prepare a report for Council's consideration by Q2 2022, in consultation with Indigenous leaders, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and artists, on the installation of a permanent memorial to honour those impacted by Canada's residential schools.

Other Impacts

Policy: GOV-002-025 Public Engagement Policy

Financial/Budget: \$40,000 from the RPC Cultural Reserve for the Residential School Memorial temporary art installation; \$300,000 is budgeted for the Indigenous Permanent Memorial or Artwork; Indigenous Advisory Committee can be funded from IA's Indigenous Events budget.

Legislative/Legal: n/a

Interdepartmental: Human Resources; Recreation, Parks, and Culture; Intergovernmental Affairs, Legislative and Legal Services

Master Plan/Framework: n/a

Enclosures

1 Residential School Memorial Public Art Update June 2022

2 Indigenous Initiatives Update Presentation