

MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS NATIONAL INQUIRY

Final Report Update and Implementation Plan Development

RECOMMENDATION

That the March 21, 2022, Community Services report CS00434, be received for information.

Report Purpose

Information Only.

Community and Public Services Committee is being informed about the actions that the City of Edmonton can take or currently does to address the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Inquiry Final Report Calls for Justice.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the February 17, 2021, Community and Public Services Committee, the following motion passed:

That Administration provide an update on the response to the Calls for Justice outlined in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Inquiry Final Report and the development of an implementation plan.

Executive Summary

- Many of the Calls for Justice identified in the Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls are multijurisdictional and intersectional in nature.
- The Calls for Justice are an opportunity to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to have the most collective impact.
- The three major themes requiring action include: awareness building, addressing underlying causes, and Indigenous resurgence.
- Local community-led solutions are already underway within Edmonton, which need to be supported through stable funding and partnerships.

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- The Calls for Justice focus on systemic changes which require multi-year efforts and partnerships.
- The City is undertaking short, medium, and long-term actions to address the Calls for Justice related to the City's policies, programs and services.
- For those Calls for Justice related to work outside of the City's jurisdiction, the City will collaborate with other orders of government, Edmonton Police Service, Indigenous governments, organizations, grassroots initiatives, and other institutional partners and communities regarding the implementation of the Calls for Justice.

REPORT

Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls is a result of the investigation into the truths told by survivors and families that have experienced physical, sexual, and all other forms of violence. The report identifies 231 Calls for Justice; 120 of those are directed towards governments. To simplify this, the final report identifies four pillars of significant historical and ongoing rights violations: The Right to Culture, The Right to Health, The Right to Security, and The Right to Justice.

The City of Edmonton's efforts and collaboration with Indigenous communities, key partners and stakeholders has created a valuable foundation for the City to address the Calls for Justice. The City's strategic planning framework (ConnectEdmonton, The City Plan, and the Corporate Business Plan) and the Indigenous Framework provide the corporate foundation for this work (Attachment 1 and 2). Specific strategies, initiatives and plans such as Edmonton: Safe City, the City's work on community safety and well-being, an indigenous housing strategy, and the Anti-Racism Strategy will support the City's response to the Calls for Justice. A report on the Community Safety and Well-being Framework is scheduled for the May 16, 2022 Community and Public Services Committee.

As a municipality, the City's response to the Calls for Justice is two-pronged in that several Calls under the justice pillar predominantly fall within the scope of Edmonton Police Service and relevant Calls under the other three pillars are primarily addressed by Administration (Attachment 3).

Other Orders of Government

In January 2022, Administration met with the federal and provincial governments to discuss the status of work related to the Calls for Justice and respective action plans. Administration will continue to meet quarterly with federal and provincial representatives to explore collaborative opportunities and provide status updates.

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The Government of Canada's Budget 2021 identified \$2.2 billion over five years and \$160.9 million per year to respond to the Calls for Justice. These funds will be used for federal programs and services; no funds will be allocated to provinces or municipalities to address this work.

On January 5, 2022, the Alberta Joint Working Group on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls submitted its final report and recommendation to the Government of Alberta. The provincial government will review the report and recommendations and identify next steps, which is anticipated to be released in June 2022.

Current Actions to Address the Calls for Justice

Administration has been working within existing budgets to support the Gender-based Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention initiative, Indigenous Framework, EndPovertyEdmonton, Recover Urban Well-being, work on community safety and well-being, and Indigenous housing initiatives including an Indigenous Housing Strategy, as well as the work of the Anti-racism Advisory and Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton committees.

At the local level, there are a number of women-centred programs and services offered including Indigenous organizations including the STREET program at Creating Hope Society, the work of the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women to promote healthy relationships, mentorship, and professional and personal growth for Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex and Asexual (2SLGBTQIA) people. There are many other programs and services offered by Indigenous organizations to address poverty, homelessness, addictions and well-being. Grassroots advocates have also played a significant role in raising awareness of the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people with events such as Red Dress Day and Walk a Mile in a Ribbon Skirt.

Administration has heard from local Indigenous organizations that there is a need for stable core operational funding. One of the challenges and priorities identified in the Reclaiming Power and Place report is the need for long-term funding to support activities such as program and service development and delivery (safety, prevention, treatment, cultural), knowledge preservation, health and wellness, and economic development). Through conversations with community in preparation for this report, community members, organizations, and advocates discussed the need to address the racism and discrimination Indigenous peoples face in Edmonton and the collection and dissemination of race-based data continues to be a challenge. The need for an Indigenous ombudsperson to investigate experiences of racism was mentioned several times.

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Next Steps

Administration will continue collaborating with other orders of government, Edmonton Police Service, Indigenous governments, organizations, grassroots initiatives, and other institutional partners and communities regarding the implementation of the Calls for Justice as needed.

Budget/Financial Implications

Implementation of some of the Calls for Justice could result in financial implications to the City. Current operational budgets support efforts aligned with some of the Calls for Justice such as the Anti-racism Advisory Committee, Gender-based Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention initiative, Indigenous Framework, EndPovertyEdmonton, Recover Urban Well-being, and the City's commitment to community safety and well-being.

The City may receive funding requests from local Indigenous organizations to support efforts related to implementing the Calls for Justice.

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

Administration engaged with community stakeholders between December 2021 to February 2022 to discuss: their involvement and/or response to the Calls for Justice, where their organizations might need City support, and to share the City's approach to the Calls for Justice. Stakeholders included Indigenous women-centered organizations, community leaders, organizers, and other organizations including representation from First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and 2SLGBTQIAA peoples in the Edmonton area. Administration also sought the guidance and support of Indigenous Matriarchal Elders and Knowledge Keepers on their experiences and understandings of this issue. These women have been instrumental in guiding the implementation of the Indigenous Framework. Their voices informed the actions and decisions by Administration, which prioritizes City efforts to commit to co-created solutions to ensure the safety and security of Indigenous peoples, especially women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

The top priorities noted from these community conversations included:

1. Public education/training and awareness on missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people
2. Action on racism/hate crimes in Edmonton including an Indigenous ombudsperson
3. Fund Indigenous non-profit organizations to support delivery of infrastructure, housing, shelters, safe houses, wrap-around support services and program
4. Reclaim Indigenous knowledge, culture, language, and ceremonies

Discussion with these stakeholders and community members must be ongoing in all responses to the Calls for Justice in order to meaningfully create the desired changes in policies/programs.

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GBA+

Administration has specifically sought the guidance of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and 2SLGBTQQIA peoples who experience systemic barriers due to compounding issues of geography, isolation, legislative oppression, and disconnection. The inclusion of these perspectives in the process, planning, and implementation of actions coming from the City of Edmonton are centered in this work, including the Gender-based Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention initiative, Indigenous Framework, EndPovertyEdmonton, Recover Urban Well-being, community safety and well-being, and Indigenous housing initiatives, as well as the work of the Anti-racism Advisory and Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton committees.

Future actions that will be taken to identify barriers to equity will be developed using specific culturally responsive tools including:

- Using the Indigenous Intersectional Based Policy Analysis Framework
- Applying Red Intersectionality analysis (an intersectional analysis that identifies and deconstructs the impacts of colonialism)
- Working with community to adapt and implement an Indigenous evaluation methodology
- Working with partners and stakeholders to identify opportunities to initiate, develop and utilize disaggregated data collection

The following equity measures that have been taken in consideration of the creation of this report and continued work:

- Activate the four roles of the Indigenous framework when engaging with community stakeholders
- Specifically seek out the experiences and perspectives of community members part of distinction based groups (Métis, Inuit, and 2SLGBTQQIA peoples)
- Ensure that the voices of those with lived experience are centered in this work

ATTACHMENTS

1. What We Have Heard, Corporate Alignments, and Priorities 2022
2. Policy Alignments - City's Strategic Planning Framework (Key City Plans)
3. Operational Alignments - Example Ongoing Responses to the Calls for Justice