

MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN, GIRLS, AND 2SLGBTQIA+ ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Recommendation

That the December 4, 2023, Community Services report CS01958, be received for information.

Requested Action	Information only		
ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle	ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals		
CONNECTED	Healthy City		
City Plan Values	BELONG		
City Plan Big City Move(s)	Inclusive and compassionate	Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities	Community safety and well-being
Corporate Business Plan	Serving Edmontonians		
Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Edmonton Indigenous Framework • Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Municipal Response Plan • Anti-Racism Strategy • Community Safety & Well-being Strategy 		
Related Council Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 21, 2022, Community Services report CS01218, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Action Plan • February 17, 2021, Community Services report CR_8386. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Inquiry Final Report Call to Justice - Options of Implementation • March 21, 2022, Community Services report CS00434 Missing, and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Inquiry Final Report Update • November 2, 2022 Office of the City Manager report OCM01477, Truth and Reconciliation Municipal Response Plan • March 14/15 2023, Office of the City Manager report OCM01781, TRC Quarterly 1st Update • May 31, 2023, Community Services report CS01826, Indigenous Framework Annual Update • May 31, 2023, Community Services report CS01826, TRC 2nd Quarterly 		

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Update

Executive Summary

- Reconciliation is one of the seven pillars of the Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy.
- The Indigenous Framework, Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Municipal Response Plan and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) and Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual (2SLGBTQQIA+) Action Plan support meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples in Edmonton and move the City forward towards reconciliation.
- The MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Action Plan identifies four themes through conversations with community members involved in the local efforts to eradicate violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples: Awareness, Addressing, Resurgence and Advocacy.
- In December 2022, Council approved the funded service package in the 2023-2026 budget (\$1.0 million in 2023 and \$1.3 million per year ongoing from 2024 onwards) to implement priority actions of the MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Action Plan.
- To date, work has included funding community-led awareness campaigns and events, collaborating in the development of violence prevention initiatives and supporting community partners in cultural and language revitalization.
- Administration will work to ensure the work continues to be responsive to the needs of the community.

REPORT

The MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA Action Plan (the Action Plan) is focused on both immediate specific actions as well as long-term actions that allow for flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of the Indigenous community in Edmonton. The action plan is a living document and Administration is prioritizing where support is most needed, aligned with where there is capacity and resources to respond.

The National Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Final Report uses the terminology Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. While completing the original Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ (MMIWG2S+) Action Plan, Administration used this terminology to best align with the National Inquiry and continue to do so in this report to align with the Action Plan. However, moving forward Administration will adopt the acronym MMIR (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives) to best align with the goal of creating awareness and addressing the impacts of colonialism on all Indigenous Peoples and to speak to the relational approach that Administration takes towards working with community. The term Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives, while relatively new, has been largely adopted in Indigenous spaces and organizations across the United States and has been growing in popularity over the past few years.

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This report outlines the four key areas indicated by Administration as developed through the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Action Plan:

1. Awareness
2. Addressing
3. Resurgence
4. Advocacy

Attachment 1 provides a more detailed account of the immediate and mid-to-long term actions and how they are being resourced. While the detailed actions for each of the pillars will evolve with community needs, this update demonstrates the current commitments and work underway to address the 231 Calls for Justice. Below are a few examples of what Administration has prioritized for immediate action in alignment with the funded service package in the 2023-2026 budget.

Awareness

Administration has focused on public education and training to enhance awareness and understanding of the impacts that residential schools and colonization have had on Indigenous communities (in particular women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people). Administration supported, funded and attended community-led events for awareness (such as Red Dress Day, the Moosehide Campaign, Walk a Mile in a Ribbon Skirt and Okisikow Way Day events). Highlights from 2023 include:

- Partnering with the Moosehide Campaign and several Indigenous community groups for the second year in a row to host a Moosehide Campaign Day at City Hall. This event had over 200 attendees and gave out over 5,000 moosehide campaign pins. The Moosehide Campaign seeks to engage boys and men in ending violence towards women and children.
- Developing education and awareness communications, specifically for learning about the truth of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples.
- Supporting Indigenous History Month every June by helping to profile Indigenous community partners, events and opportunities, which includes funding and support. Learning and education is a critical response to the Calls for Justice, the Calls to Action and is a guiding action in the Indigenous Framework.

An important part of awareness is the ability to share the story of the work of the Indigenous Relations Office across the corporation and with community partners. The MMIWG 2SLGBTQQIA+ funded service package included support for a dedicated resource to develop and operationalize a communications approach. This approach integrates the Action Plan and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Municipal Response Plan with the work of the Indigenous Framework, ensuring that this will be a corporate wide endeavor, guided by the values of wahigicicobi (kinship). This resource has worked on developing and improving the MMIWG 2SLGBTQQIA+ City of Edmonton webpage, improving MMIWG 2SLGBTQQIA+ branding, recording and sharing the stories around MMIWG 2SLGBTQQIA+ events through social media platforms, and is in the process of developing an educational series podcast.

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Addressing

Addressing includes specific actions and changes to the systems, policies and procedures that the municipality is responsible for. This work is done in partnership with community to support positive outcomes and improve lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples. Highlights from 2023 include:

- Continuing violence prevention initiatives with an Indigenous lens and strategic partnerships (Gender-based Violence Prevention Initiative, Active Bystander Training).
- Supporting prevention and intervention programs that specifically address the needs of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples. Such as the tapahtêyimôkamik (humble lodge) kinship group, where the City has facilitated appropriate river valley space for cultural programming for women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ and youth.
- Working with community partners in developing an Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples mentorship program.

Further, the MMIWG 2SLGBTQQIA+ Action Plan includes the need for an Indigenous Ombudsperson to be incorporated into the implementation of the Independent Anti-Racism Body or the High Level Anti-Racism Office. As development continues on this work, Administration will continue to explore and work with the City Manager's Advisory Panel and experts within the corporation to find the best fit for this role.

Resurgence

Resurgence includes funding and partnerships with Indigenous communities to support the reclamation of culture, knowledge, language and autonomy. Highlights from 2023 include:

- Funding community programs, services and activities that revitalize and empower Indigenous communities, culture, art and languages; in particular the role of women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples within Indigenous communities including the Iskewehew Kamik (Women's Lodge) ceremony, Young Indigenous Women's Circle of Leadership event and the Edmonton Aboriginal Seniors Centre's MaMao Payiwak Culture Day event.
- Supporting the community in their work around language revitalization through the renaming processes of the Oliver Community League and Okîsikow Way.
- Supporting the okimaw kihêw mêkwanak (OKM) community group to lead the Heartland project, which focuses on re-indigenizing urban green spaces and creating space for Indigenous cultural practices and ceremonies inclusive of 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples within the city.

Advocacy

In addition to the actions identified above and to achieve a greater collective impact, Administration will develop a more detailed advocacy plan in alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Municipal Response Plan and in partnerships with local community advocates. Many of the Calls for Justice are outside of the jurisdiction of the City of Edmonton. However, the City can play a role as an advocate to key partners to respond and commit to change.

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The advocacy plan may include:

- Internal collaboration with intergovernmental relations and the Indigenous Framework department action teams to identify the gaps and opportunities.
- Listening to community organizations, leaders and family survivors to integrate the Calls for Justice including in areas such as: child welfare, education, health, justice system, media and business.
- Meeting regularly with provincial and federal officials to encourage the adoption and implementation of priorities outlined in the National Inquiry's Final Report's Calls to Justice that align with the Government of Alberta and Government of Canada's jurisdiction.

Budget/Financial Implications

During the 2023-2026 budget deliberations, City Council approved on-going funding for MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ with funding from the Community Safety and Well-Being Funds to implement priority actions of the plan.

Community Insight

The National Calls for Justice originate from a national perspective; the work and approaches taken by Administration need to be informed by a local perspective. The MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Action Plan must reflect local needs.

Administration worked with Indigenous women-centered organizations, community leaders, grassroots advocates and other organizations, including representation from First Nations, Métis, Inuit and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples in the Edmonton area, to develop the Action Plan.

As Administration continues to work and implement the plan there have been multiple opportunities to hear insights and feedback, including:

- The continued sharing of truths that created the 231 Calls for Justice through MMIWG2S+ reading circle and various learning opportunities.
- Monthly Elders Circle meetings including kinship gatherings with City Council, leadership and frontline staff.
- Informal and ongoing discussions and support for MMIWG 2SLGBTQQIA+ Community advocates and events such as Red Dress Day, Okisikow Way Day, Sisters in Spirit and Walk a Mile in a Ribbon Skirt.

This work is ongoing and the relationships have been and will continue to be at the center of the work. Administration will ensure the work continues to be responsive to the needs of the community. The Action Plan is a living document that evolves as feedback is received and relationships are strengthened with community partners.

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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 and disconnection. The Calls for Justice and the National Inquiry process was an example of addressing intersectionality in action, from an Indigenous perspective grounded in the understanding of colonialism. Lived experiences will guide this work.

Actions to identify barriers to equity will be developed using specific culturally responsive tools such as applying Red Intersectionality analysis (an intersectional analysis that identifies and deconstructs the impacts of colonialism).

The following equity measures have been applied to the creation of this report and continued work:

- Ensuring that the voices of those with lived experience are centered in this work.
- Activating the four roles of the Indigenous Framework when engaging with impacted and affected communities.
- Specifically seeking out the experiences and perspectives of Métis, Inuit and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples community members.
- Adopting the term Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives (MMIR) to address the gender diverse realities of Indigenous Peoples and seeks to promote gender equity when talking about the issue of violence against Indigenous Peoples.

Attachment

1. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual (2SLGBTQQIA+) Action Plan Update