

## Update on Indigenous Governance Relations Model Engagement and Next Steps

### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee work closely with the Indigenous Relations Office to strengthen leadership-to-leadership relations between The City of Calgary's elected officials and the political and cultural leaders of the Treaty 7 Nations, Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3, and the Calgary Urban Indigenous Community.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Indigenous relations governance model engagement with the Indigenous community is in progress. This work advances call to action 45.iii, the reaffirmation of treaty relationships, under Stream C: Leadership-to-Leadership Relations, in the White Goose Flying Report.
- Indigenous engagement dialogue emphasizes the importance of building mutually respectful relationships between The City's elected officials and Indigenous leaders so that collaboration on matters impacting Indigenous people can be achieved and sustained.
- The recommendation to designate key positions within Calgary's elected government to work with Indigenous political and cultural leaders is an interim step intended to begin relationship-building and contribute to the ongoing work to develop an Indigenous governance model.
- **What does this mean to Calgarians?** The City's engagement with Indigenous people in the co-creation of an Indigenous relations governance model demonstrates to Calgarians its commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.
- **Why does this matter?** Reconciliation requires awareness of organizational structures and processes that contribute to the continued colonization of Indigenous people. The co-creation of an Indigenous relations governance model is important because it recognizes the imposition of colonial governance models and values an Indigenous governance structure that is legitimate and works for Indigenous people. Given that this model is being developed within a colonial corporate structure, it is critical that elected officials within that structure build relationships with Indigenous leaders so that an ethical space can be created that will support collaboration and mutual respect.
- In February 2021, the Calgary Indigenous Relations Office engaged 28 Elders from the Elders' Knowledge Circle.
- Blackfoot Knowledge Keepers and cultural and political leaders from Siksika, Piikani and Kainai Nations were engaged on December 2, 2021.
- Engagements with the remaining Treaty 7 Nations, Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 and the Urban Indigenous community will take place throughout 2022.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A well-run city
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

### DISCUSSION

The City's Indigenous relations background includes governance, beginning with the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee. As a committee of Council, the governance of the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee is structured within the parameters of Boards, Committees and Commissions. A key finding of the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee review directed by Council was that its governance structure was not reflective of Indigenous

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governance models. Reconciliation will require reassessment of the imposed colonial governance model through the Boards, Commissions and Committees and endorsement and respect for the Indigenous relations governance model that will be developed for The City of Calgary.

- The Elders' Knowledge Circle is supported by the Calgary United Way and consists of Treaty 7, Métis, and urban Indigenous Elders. The Calgary Indigenous Relations Office's engagement with the Elders' Knowledge Circle produced the following significant learnings:
  - **Elders** are fundamental to Indigenous relations governance at The City as they carry traditional knowledge and can inform City policy. Each Elder has different knowledge and skill sets. It is important for The City to build relationships, so that Elders validated by the community are selected to participate in the governance of Indigenous relations at The City. An Indigenous relations governance model will be incomplete without the participation of Elders.
  - **Indigenous Natural Law and Ethical Space.** Natural law is grounded in instructions from the Creator that tell people how to conduct themselves and guides the fulfillment of their roles and responsibilities. Ethical space is the space between two distinct cultures. It provides a bridge between the two cultures and enables them to understand each other, work together in an ethical manner and make mutually beneficial decisions. The co-creation and implementation of an Indigenous relations governance model must take place in an ethical space and be guided by Indigenous natural law.
  - **City Relationships.** An Elder that participated in the engagement said, "We are all here because of Treaty. We are partners." The City's creation and maintenance of relationships will allow it to work more effectively with Elders. There is no relationship if one party is not aware of who the other party is. If Indigenous natural law and ethical space provide the framework for Indigenous governance, City relationships with Indigenous leaders is the process that will support the creation of the model.
  - **Indigenous Values, Principles, Protocols.** Indigenous values, such as integrity, humility, inclusion, consensus and respect, emphasize Indigenous worldviews. Principles, like showing respect, help build relationships. Protocols are codes of conduct that Indigenous people follow. Indigenous values, principles and protocols are the foundation of Indigenous governance and form the "how" and the "what" of Indigenous relations governance at The City.

The recommendation in this report is based on initial learnings from Indigenous engagements conducted to date. Engagement participants articulated that referring Indigenous leaders through Administration does not reaffirm treaty relationships. Because Indigenous engagement is comprehensive and will take time, the participation of the Executive Committee Chair and Vice Chair in leadership-to-leadership relations with Indigenous political and cultural leaders reaffirms treaty relationships and lays the foundation for strong and respectful relationships under an Indigenous relations governance model. Leadership-to-leadership relations will also demonstrate a path towards administration-to-administration relationship building needed to support the work of corporate and Indigenous leaders and to identify priorities and collaborate on mutually beneficial projects.

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### Steps in the development of the model:

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Actual &amp; Projected Timeline</i>
Elders' Knowledge Circle engagement	Q1 2021
Blackfoot Nations engagement	Q4 2021
Stoney-Nakoda Nations engagement	Q1 2022
Tsuut'ina Nation engagement	Q2 2022
Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 engagement	Q2 2022
Calgary urban Indigenous community engagement	Q3 2022
Internal stakeholder engagement (Calgary Aboriginal Urban Committee & Indigenous Relations Coordinating Committee)	Q4 2022
Data Theming, Analysis & Validation	Q1 – Q4 2023
Indigenous Governance Model Recommendations Report	Q4 2023

### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

Engagement is ongoing.

### IMPLICATIONS

#### Social

The recommendation to work with the Indigenous community to co-create an Indigenous relations governance model for The City of Calgary is centred on establishing and maintaining strong relationships with First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous Calgarians. This is a fundamental component of reconciliation and contributes to the implementation of the Calls to Action as committed to in the White Goose Flying report. Through the establishment and continued growth of strong relationships, The City can better understand the realities of Indigenous peoples and support the full inclusion of Indigenous peoples in civic life. As articulated during the engagements held to date, Indigenous values illustrate the beneficial social impact the diverse perspectives of Indigenous peoples can have on everyday decision-making.

#### Environmental

The National Centre for First Nations Governance identifies responsible land stewardship as one of the pillars of effective Indigenous governance based on the Indigenous understanding of the interconnectedness of all people, living things and the environment. Land stewardship is anticipated to be an incorporated principle of the new Indigenous relations governance model. The City of Calgary's Indigenous Policy acknowledges that the city is situated on traditional Treaty 7 territory, that it must sustain an active and shared process of reconciliation through the four ways (knowing, engaging, building relationships, equitable environments) and that The

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City's planning and decision making will have bearing on traditional Treaty 7 territory. The City is currently renewing its Climate Strategy and has declared a climate emergency. Indigenous communities tend to be directly impacted by environmental disasters exacerbated by the climate crises. This recommendation strengthens the opportunity for The City to apply its Indigenous Policy by creating space for Indigenous ways of knowing about the environment into its climate plans and working with Indigenous leaders on a coordinated effort to address the climate crises.

### **Economic**

In alignment with The City's Economic Resilience Strategy, the recommendation creates opportunity for Indigenous peoples to be directly involved in co-creating an Indigenous relations governance model that can influence the development of meaningful partnerships between The City and the Indigenous community, including potential economic partnerships. Addressing economic reconciliation has been identified by Indigenous engagement stakeholders to date as an important priority for The City.

### **Service and Financial Implications**

*No anticipated financial impact*

### **RISK**

<b>Identified Risk</b>	<b>Strategies to Ensure Success</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perpetuation of colonial governance functions and practices; limited inclusivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct engagement efforts that are led by culturally competent and respected Indigenous staff</li> <li>▪ Ensure that essential knowledge, past learnings and teachings are woven into future structures</li> <li>▪ Build leadership-to-leadership relations to support treaty relationships and Indigenous relations under an Indigenous relations governance model.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inconsistent, rushed, superficial or culturally inappropriate engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop comprehensive engagement plans that are culturally appropriate</li> <li>▪ Prioritize the recognition of the diversity of Indigenous people in Calgary and area</li> <li>▪ Take the time to get it right</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A fractured Indigenous relations governance approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain a broader view of the overall governance landscape, with a focus on the preferred future state</li> <li>▪ Incorporate engagement and review learnings, providing a basis for a meaningful Indigenous relations governance model for The City</li> </ul>

### **ATTACHMENT**

1. Previous Council Direction, Background

#### Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Chris Arthurs	People, Innovation & Collaboration Services	Inform