

## Indigenous Gathering Place 2022 Q4 Update

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### RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Executive Committee recommend that Council receive this update report for the Corporate Record.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The City and the Indigenous Gathering Place Society are honouring the commitment made through the May 2021 Smudge and Pipe Ceremony and Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 2) to work together to establish an Indigenous Gathering Place where we will share, connect, heal, renew, and celebrate Indigenous cultures.
- The City and Indigenous Gathering Place Society are working jointly to identify and establish what is required to prepare and transfer City-owned land at or around the confluence (where the Bow and Elbow Rivers meet) to enable the development of an Indigenous Gathering Place.
- The City and Indigenous Gathering Place Society have established four joint working groups that will collectively make informed decisions.
- **What does this mean for Calgarians?**
  - An Indigenous Gathering Place at the confluence of the Bow and Elbow rivers will provide a dedicated place where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can share, connect, heal, renew, and celebrate Indigenous cultures.
- **Why does it matter?**
  - The City is committed to Truth and Reconciliation as outlined in the Council approved White Goose Flying report. Specifically Calls to Action #21 - fund new healing centres, #22 - recognize the value of healing practices and #48ii enhance self-determination in spiritual matters.
  - Establishing an Indigenous Gathering Place is highlighted as an important action in Council's Strategic Direction 2023-2026 to support Downtown revitalization.
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

### DISCUSSION

The City and Indigenous Gathering Place Society have agreed to jointly work to identify and establish what is required to prepare land to develop an Indigenous Gathering Place. The success of the collaboration necessitates trust and understanding. The City team has strengthened its relationship with Indigenous Gathering Place Society by:

- Assigning a Relationship Manager and Project Coordinator to facilitate dialogue with Indigenous Gathering Place Society to better understand each other's perspectives, needs and interests.
- Undertaking Indigenous Awareness training and building a collective understanding of our shared colonial history and its intergenerational impacts on Indigenous people, and why an Indigenous Gathering Place is so important.
- Refining Administration's approach by integrating and involving Indigenous Gathering Place Society in the development and implementation of a joint workplan.

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Four joint working groups have been established to collectively make informed decisions. These working groups will focus on:

1. Addressing current heritage designation of the lands around the confluence.
2. Undertaking Geotechnical and Environmental Assessments to understand the condition of the potential property.
3. Building a workplan for the Land Use Designation process.
4. Implementing a joint communications and community outreach plan.

### **EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

- |                          |   |                                     |   |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public engagement was undertaken        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public/interested parties were informed | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Public communication or engagement was not required |

The City met with representatives from Indigenous Gathering Place Society on multiple occasions throughout October and November 2022, including participating in their Community Feast. These events have strengthened the relationship and established a joint approach. Through dialogue, four key learnings were identified that influenced the joint work plan approach, including:

1. **The importance of working in Indigenous Ways:** Indigenous People place importance on building and maintaining trusting relationships, respecting cultural protocols, sharing information, and walking together a path of work.
2. **The need to establish an approach for working together:** While the Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 2) validated agreement to work together, The City and Indigenous Gathering Place Society had not established a mutually agreed upon approach for working together.
3. **That Indigenous Gathering Place Society is refining their business plan:** The 2019 business plan is being refined to bring focus to the core activities that will occur within the gathering place. This is needed to help confirm future land use requirements.
4. **The need to delineate the property for a Method of Disposition Report:** Opportunities and constraints of different potential property configurations need to be assessed before the Indigenous Gathering Place Society and The City can make a joint and informed decision on the most suitable new property for developing an Indigenous Gathering Place.

This fall, invitations were sent to the tribal councils of the 7 Nations signatory to Treaty 7 and the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 to participate in Leader-to-Leader engagement. An initial engagement with Leaders from Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 took place on 2022 November 29, and Administration is working to confirm timing for engagement with the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai and Piikani Nations).

To date, we have not received a response from leaders of the G4 Tribal Council (Tsuut'ina Nation and the Bearspaw, Chiniki, and Goodstoney Nations of the Stoney Nakoda). Given the importance of, and interest in, engaging Indigenous Leaders on the Indigenous Gathering Place, we will continue to seek engagement with leaders of the G4 Tribal Council.

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Administration continues to communicate the current state of this work to key partners related to property options being explored.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Social**

The establishment of an Indigenous Gathering Place is an important step towards our path to Truth and Reconciliation. The social benefits include supporting Indigenous people through healing from the legacy of colonization, reconnecting with their Indigenous cultures and bringing Indigenous people and Calgarians together to celebrate Indigenous people and cultures. The Indigenous Gathering Place will also enhance the learning of non-Indigenous Calgarians.

#### **Environmental**

Indigenous worldviews about the environment include the interconnectedness of all living things, respectful relationships with land and nature, and the responsibility to take care of the land and engage in sustainable practices. As an Indigenous organization, Indigenous Gathering Place Society will adhere to traditional environmental principles and practices at the land in and around the confluence and provide an opportunity for Calgarians to learn about Indigenous environmental worldviews and practices.

#### **Economic**

Economic reconciliation is an integral part of reconciliation. The Indigenous Gathering Place will provide economic opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Calgarians from construction to operations, including procurement, employment, and consulting. The Indigenous Gathering Place will also contribute to the revitalization of downtown and support local tourism.

### **Service and Financial Implications**

#### **Existing capital funding - one-time**

\$3 million was previously approved by Council through the 2022 Service Plans & Budgets Adjustment (C2021-1436) 5B. Advancing Stream B of White Goose Flying. Spiritual Healing, Culture and Arts Commemoration, to advance project planning / design and any required immediate improvements to acquired lands.

### **RISK**

Not following through on The City's commitments to advance Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, Smudge and Pipe Ceremony and Memorandum of Understanding, and Notice of Motion may include:

1. Reputation and relationship impacts between The City and Indigenous Gathering Place Society, Indigenous Calgarians, Indigenous City employees and citizens.
2. Damage the relationship and trust currently being built with Indigenous Leaders.
3. Potential risks to the property options being considered. These risks are being mitigated through the four joint working groups.

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#### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Previous Council Direction, Background
2. Memorandum of Understanding: Indigenous Gathering Place Society and City of Calgary (2021 May 26)
3. Excerpt from 2022 Service Plans & Budget Adjustments Section 5B. Advancing Stream B of White Goose Flying, Spiritual Healing, Culture and Arts (C2021-1436)

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Francois Bouchart	Capital Priorities & Investment	Approve
Chris Arthurs	People, Innovation & Collaboration Services	Approve
Michael Thompson	Infrastructure Services	Approve
Doug Morgan	Operational Services	Consult
Katie Black	Community Services	Inform
Stuart Dalgleish	Planning & Development Services	Inform
Campbell Berry	Real Estate & Development Services	Inform