

People, Innovation & Collaboration Services Report to  
Intergovernmental Affairs Committee  
2024 September 05

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
IGA2024-0941

## **Protocol (Relationship) Agreement – Scoping Update**

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### **PURPOSE**

This report is a further acknowledgement of the Blackfoot Confederacy's (Siksika, Piikani, Amskaapiikani and Kainai Nations) request to create a Protocol Agreement with The City of Calgary and outlines the recommended approach for co-development. Administration is seeking Council's approval to apply to the Government of Alberta's Alberta Community Partnership fund and direction to proceed with Agreement development.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION**

That the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee recommend Council to direct Administration, in support of The City of Calgary's commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, to: Scope out and identify the resources needed to support Protocol Agreements with Nations; Begin with scoping and identifying the resources for a Protocol Agreement in response to the request made through the Mayor's Office 2023 November 16 by the Blackfoot Confederacy; and Report back to Council on the results of the scoping work and the resources required through the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee no later than the end of Q2, 2024.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee:

1. Forward Report IGA2024-0941 to the 2024 September 23 Indigenous Focused Regular Council Meeting, as an Item from Committee.

That the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee recommend that Council:

1. Direct Administration to commence Protocol (Relationship) Agreement development with the Blackfoot Confederacy, and report back to Council through the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee with the agreement for approval, upon completion.
2. Approve Administration's request to apply to the Government of Alberta's 2024-2025 Alberta Community Partnership fund to access matching grant dollars for protocol implementation.
3. Direct Administration to develop a sustainment plan for Protocol (Relationship) Agreements beyond 2026, and report back to Council through the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee in Q1 of 2026.

### **CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS**

General Manager Chris Arthurs concurs with this report and recommendations.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Blackfoot Confederacy is the first Indigenous group to request a formal relationship agreement with The City of Calgary.
- Protocol (Relationship) Agreements can establish a framework of cooperation on areas that impact social, environmental, and economic areas, such as (but not limited to) areas

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that municipalities may be able to support. Agreements can serve as a commitment from both parties to continuously work together.

- The City of Calgary does not currently have Protocol (Relationship) Agreements with any First Nation or Indigenous group; the Province of Alberta has reached three First Nations agreements since 2019.
- Administration has completed its scoping to identify an approach, timeline and approximate resources needed to respond to this request.
- Administration will support agreement development by using partial funds from the one-time \$1.5 million over 2023-2026 earmarked for operations of the Indigenous Relations Office. For implementation, Administration is requesting Council direction to apply to the Government of Alberta's Alberta Community Partnership grant to leverage \$30,000 of matching dollars.
- In anticipation of future requests, The City is committed to meeting with any local Indigenous Nation who requests a Protocol Agreement with The City. Timelines for development will depend on the number of current requests and the resources available at the time of the request.

## DISCUSSION

### Background

On 2023 November 16, the Mayor's Office received a letter from the Blackfoot Confederacy requesting that The City of Calgary enter negotiations with the Blackfoot Confederacy on the development of a Protocol (Relationship) Agreement (see Attachment 1). Protocol (Relationship) Agreements can establish a framework of cooperation on areas that impact social, environmental, and economic areas, such as (but not limited to) areas that municipalities may be able to support. These agreements are legally non-binding, however, provide parameters and principles for how cities and Indigenous Nations can work together in a good way. To date, only the Blackfoot Confederacy has requested an Agreement, and Administration will consider any future requests received from local Indigenous Nations.

### Agreement Scoping

To better understand the resources required and how Protocol (Relationship) Agreements can be developed, Administration undertook scoping work to inform its recommended guidelines. This included meeting with Canadian cities with established agreements and completing a desk review of additional resources to capture learnings and recommended approaches.

To further tailor and co-develop an approach specific to the Blackfoot Confederacy and City's relationship, Administration met with the Blackfoot Confederacy's intergovernmental staff to identify the following guidelines:

- **Using parallel processes** – This would include inviting an Elder to participate in initial meetings to guide the Agreement's development and hosting a Pipe Ceremony when the agreement is ready for signing.
- **Identifying and understanding mutual areas of interest** – Each party will take time to learn about one another's key areas of interest, which can be included in the agreement.

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- **Leveraging existing templates** – Administration will borrow from the Blackfoot Confederacy’s learnings with the Government of Alberta, to simplify the development process. Should this approach not meet the needs of both parties, other agreement options can be explored or developed.
- **Administrative co-drafting** – Administrative counterparts from the Blackfoot Confederacy and The City of Calgary will work together to draft the agreement with support and advice from their respective leaders.

These guidelines have also been shared with Blackfoot Confederacy’s Chiefs during their August meeting.

### Timeline and Resourcing

Administration anticipates that this Agreement will take approximately six months to develop. Some resources will be required to host an Administrative leader-to-leader information exchange, provide Elder honorarium(s), host a pipe ceremony and translate the completed agreement. Government Relations will use part of its earmarked \$375,000 per year (\$1.5 million over 2023-2026) for the Indigenous Relations Office to fund these expenses.

Anticipated costs for Agreement development are low relative to in-kind and financial costs for Agreement implementation. Implementation will require internal Administrative capacity (beyond Government Relations), to develop and action agreed upon work plans in identified areas of service (see Attachment 2). Administration will also require a hosting budget for convening tables. To support this work, The City would like to apply for the Government of Alberta’s Alberta Community Partnership grant, which provides up to \$30,000 of one-time matching funds for protocol agreement implementation. If successful, the funding will be used to pilot implementation structures, such as working tables or meeting schedules.

If the above resourcing plan is granted and implemented, Administration can sustain its work with the Blackfoot Confederacy until early 2026. This is based on the current pending request for one agreement and will not apply if additional requests are received and supported before year end 2026.

Having funds to sustain this work until 2026 will provide an opportunity to initiate implementation, monitor costs and develop a refined budget for future years. It will also inform resourcing for future requests from other Nations.

### 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 |

### IMPLICATIONS

#### Social

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The Federation of Canadian Municipalities states that protocol agreements demonstrate a clear long-term joint vision for community-to-community relationship, a willingness to heal past wrongs and the ability to renew relationships between communities. Agreements can also create a formal commitment that protects the relationship from a change in leadership and signals its importance to Calgarians and staff.

### Environmental

Protocol agreements develop a framework that can support and facilitate joint environmental initiatives and resource sharing, which can result in more effective environmental stewardship.

### Economic

In building and strengthening relationships with Indigenous Nations, agreements offer an opportunity to diversify and expand The City's economy through new businesses and partnerships.

### Service and Financial Implications

Existing operating funding - one-time

### RISK

- There is a reputational and relational risk for The City if it declines this request or does not invest adequate resources in the process. This may be perceived as disrespectful and erode trust in The City's commitment to Reconciliation and its collaboration with First Nations.
- There is a risk that the project could take longer to complete than estimated since it is the first of its kind. In seeking to co-develop and use parallel processes, this could also lead to delays.
- There is a risk that once this Agreement is complete, other local First Nations may request an agreement, resulting in resource limitations and capacity constraints.

### ATTACHMENTS

1. Blackfoot Confederacy Protocol Agreement Request
2. Implementation Resourcing
3. Presentation

Department Circulation

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

Author: Government Relations