

# Hamilton **URBAN INDIGENOUS STRATEGY**



Hamilton

June 2019



## THE BEADS AND LEATHER STRAND

The beads and leather strand represents the journey of the Urban Indigenous Strategy. The strand represents the number of individuals who participated in the development of the Urban Indigenous Strategy through consultation and various events. The beads represent the connections that were made throughout the development of the strategy. The bead strand was brought to all Urban Indigenous Strategy events where participants had the opportunity to add on a bead. The strand will continue to grow as we continue with community consultation during the implementation phase.



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**“Encourage everyone to understand the traditional territory on which they stand.”**



# WELCOME MESSAGE

The City of Hamilton is situated upon the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas. This land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, which was an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge that this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Today, the City of Hamilton is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island (North America) and we recognize that we must do more to learn about the rich history of this land so that we can better understand our roles as residents, neighbours, partners and caretakers.

The City of Hamilton together with Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents is embarking on a journey to reconciliation that will honour the history, knowledge, rights, languages and cultures of the First Peoples of Canada. The Urban Indigenous Strategy for the City of Hamilton responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (2015) and the voices of our community members.

The Urban Indigenous Strategy (UIS) was developed and informed through various events including community conversations, youth art projects and the UIS survey. Our journey to reconciliation must be forged together with Indigenous and non-Indigenous allies who can collectively champion the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation.

We are hopeful that Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy will inspire individuals, community agencies, companies and industries in Hamilton to reflect on their operations and delivery of service and how those activities intersect with the themes of land, people and spirit as outlined in the Strategy. Our success will be achieved by working together with many partners.

We honour the UIS Coordinating Circle members who volunteered their time and shared their knowledge over the past three years:

- Monique Lavallee,** President,  
*Hamilton Executive Directors Aboriginal Coalition*
- Josh Dockstator,** Former Vice-President,  
*Hamilton Executive Directors Aboriginal Coalition*
- Susan Barberstock,** Former Executive Director,  
*Hamilton Regional Indian Centre*
- Lyndon George,** Indigenous Justice Coordinator,  
*Hamilton Community Legal Clinic*
- Cat Cayuga,** Community Legal Worker,  
*Hamilton Community Legal Clinic*
- Marilyn Wright,** Chair, *Hamilton Aboriginal Advisory Committee*
- Micheal Forrest,** Youth Representative
- John Ariyo,** Manager, *Community Initiatives, City of Hamilton*
- Jessica Chase,** Manager, *Community Strategies, City of Hamilton*
- Shylo Elmayan,** Former Sr. Project Manager,  
*Urban Indigenous Strategy, City of Hamilton*
- Paul Johnson,** General Manager,  
*Healthy and Safe Communities Department,  
City of Hamilton*
- Nicole Jones,** Project Manager,  
*Indigenous Initiatives, City of Hamilton*
- Joe-Anne Priel,** Former General Manager,  
*Community and Emergency Services Department,  
City of Hamilton*

Miigwetch,

Monique Lavallee,  
First Speaker, Urban Indigenous Strategy Coordinating Circle

**“Help non-Indigenous people to understand the history of Canadian government actions and how it impacts the lives of Indigenous peoples.”**





**“We need land for ceremony,  
particularly a space that is  
protected, safe from racism.”**





# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These guiding principles are presented as a foundation on which the City of Hamilton will carry out the actions of the Urban Indigenous Strategy. They will also guide the City during future projects and programs that have a great impact on Indigenous residents in Hamilton. The City commits to these principles and views them as important steps towards building trust and respectful relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in our City and beyond.

## COMMITMENT

The City of Hamilton is committed to having a trusting relationship with Indigenous communities where we communicate and work together appropriately to address the unique needs and issues of Indigenous people.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

The City of Hamilton will provide a clear picture of what goes on “behind the scenes” and answer for the decisions and actions that are taken.

## CONSULTATION

The City of Hamilton will consult Indigenous communities with integrity and in good faith. Meaningful consultation occurs when concerns are responded to and when there is clear communication that both parties understand.

## RECIPROCITY

Both the City of Hamilton and the Indigenous community have mutual responsibilities when partnering and collaborating with each other. Reciprocity is about mutual exchanges that honours what each other brings to the partnership.

## INCLUSION

First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives, protocols and traditions are appreciated and included. Indigenous people carry diverse knowledge which can inform and advise a wide range of programs and services.



## RECOGNITION

We recognize that Indigenous people have occupied this territory for many generations and continue to make many diverse, social and economic contributions to the whole community. We seek actions to show this recognition.

## COMMEMORATION

Commemoration means the City will support efforts to educate and reflect on the difficult parts of our shared history in Canada including the legacy of Indian residential schools and child welfare policies, and treatment in the criminal justice system. We should not forget and must learn to move forward together.

## ALLYSHIP

Being an ally is acknowledging the ongoing and historical oppression that Indigenous peoples encounter daily and take action on supporting Indigenous peoples rights and history. Acknowledging that Indigenous people face many unique barriers in health, poverty, justice, employment and intergenerational trauma, and acknowledging that Indigenous people have close relationships to the land and their traditional knowledge.

**“Help promote the language and this will strengthen the self-esteem of youth.”**

## LOGO

A logo was designed to reflect the lessons learned in the process of developing the Urban Indigenous Strategy. The logo includes a green braid that symbolizes a braid of sweetgrass. Sweetgrass is a sacred medicine among many Indigenous nations, including the Anishinaabek.

Sweetgrass carries many teachings but there is one that represents this work. One blade of grass can be easily broken; but when many are braided together, it is much harder to break. We cannot do this work alone and our partners and residents must be part of the braid.





**“Our city could learn a lot from Aboriginal teachings, from respect for Elders to honouring women and Mother Earth.”**



## BACKGROUND

In the spring of 2015, Hamilton City Council committed to develop an Urban Indigenous Strategy that would identify actions and strengthen the City's relationship with the Indigenous community. City staff began by reaching out to community partners to co-develop this strategy. Staff worked with Indigenous community partners and agreed to learn and follow principles that honour traditional knowledge, teachings and reciprocity. The key objectives of the Hamilton Urban Indigenous Strategy are to:

- Identify actions within municipal jurisdiction and capacity arising from the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's Final Report.
- Celebrate and honour Indigenous people, cultures and traditions.
- Promote a greater understanding among all Hamiltonians through public education on the histories and contributions of Indigenous peoples.
- Create opportunities for education and internal collaboration among City staff to strengthen the relationship with the Indigenous community and service providers.

The strategy is the result of two years of working together on a process that went through three phases. **Phase One:** "plant the strategy" (December 2016–December 2017) was focused on establishing the governance structure, guiding principles, and raising awareness of this new work among the Indigenous community and all Hamilton residents. **Phase Two,** "cultivate the strategy" (January 2018–August 2018) focused on engaging Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents in a variety of ways about the needs and priorities for the strategy. **Phase Three:** "harvest the strategy" (September 2018–December 2018) involved finalizing and sharing the findings and recommendations from the first two phases.

## RESEARCH ON BEST PRACTICES

During Phase One of the strategy development, research was completed to see how reconciliation is happening locally and across Canada. How Canadian municipalities are responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report and how they are developing their own urban Indigenous strategies was first researched. This research found that municipalities across Canada are engaged in a number of activities, such as: cultural awareness training for staff; youth employment initiatives; creating information guides for Indigenous residents; renaming of facilities and infrastructure in Indigenous languages; and, establishing awards for local efforts in reconciliation.

Additional research conducted by McMaster students looked at how Indigenous services providers in Hamilton are addressing the TRC Calls to Action. In this report, two main opportunities were identified. First, the Calls to Action can help direct the future growth of the Indigenous agencies of Hamilton. The Calls to Action provide a framework for supporting capacity-building within the Indigenous community as well as guiding the development of strategic partnerships and collaborative programming. The second opportunity identified that Hamilton's non-Indigenous agencies should take action to address discrimination and racism by providing their staff with cultural awareness and safety training. Training and education are seen as key to developing changes at the service level, and to assist agencies with better recruitment, service, and support for Indigenous clients and employees.

The research findings were backed up by the community engagement completed during Phase Two. The voices of residents reinforced the importance of collaboration, education, and helping Indigenous individuals and families to become healthy and feel respected.



## **CIRCLES TO DEVELOP THE STRATEGY**

The development of the Urban Indigenous Strategy was a collaboration involving City staff, elected officials and members of the Indigenous community. To keep the process informed and on track, two working groups were established.

A Coordinating Circle was created to lead the strategy with membership comprised of Indigenous community partners and City staff. The Coordinating Circle has acted as a planning table and carried out its work based on principles that honour traditional Indigenous knowledge and teachings including the Seven Grandfather Teachings of the Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee teachings of *ga nigohi:yo*. One of its key tasks was to review the 94 Calls to Action from the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report and identify those that will be addressed within the strategy.

An internal Staff Circle on Indigenous Relations was also established and is comprised of management from all City departments. Its mandate has been to champion relationship building, share information and best practices, and identify opportunities for improved engagement with Indigenous peoples.

## **TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION CALLS TO ACTION**

One objective of the Urban Indigenous Strategy is to identify municipal actions arising from the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's Final Report. The Coordinating Circle spent time reviewing the Calls to Action to identify which of the 94 should be included. In all, 17 Calls to Action were identified and then explored through Phase Two of the strategy development. Although some of the 17 Calls to Action may be directed at another level of government, or another institution, the Coordinating Circle members agreed that there would be actions the City of Hamilton could take to align with the spirit of the Calls to Action.

The identified Calls to Action are: 12, 17, 22, 23, 43, 44, 47, 57, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 87, 88, 92, and 93. A full description of those Calls to Action grouped by themes is found in Appendix A.

# “Truly listen when working and consulting the Indigenous community.”



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To develop the Urban Indigenous Strategy, the journey has been as important as the destination. It was critical to make sure that the community, including both Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents, feel that they have been part of the journey. Likewise, we hoped to help City staff to see how their work is connected to our objectives and know that they will be involved moving forward. The following summarizes the many ways that community members and City staff have come together.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND COLLABORATION

Partnerships and collaboration were successful ways to raise awareness and establish a presence in the community. Collaboration was achieved in the following areas.

- **Community Outreach:**

Outreach and relationship building activities were conducted through participation and partnership on community events. Examples include a Haudenosaunee Legal Principles workshop, a photo exhibit, the 12th Annual Celebration of Growth, the Soaring Spirits Festival, and an Ally=Action event. Hundreds of Indigenous partners, residents and staff attended these events.

- **Staff Engagement:**

The Staff Circle on Indigenous Relations has sought out learning opportunities to increase knowledge about the Indigenous community in Hamilton and increase an understanding of what City staff need to learn before moving ahead with reconciliation. These opportunities included listening to residential school survivors at the Woodland Cultural Centre and getting together with the Professional Aboriginal Advocacy and Networking Group to listen to traditional teachings. The Corporate Leadership Team welcomed Amos Key Jr., Mohawk Nation,



Turtle Clan, to speak about the legacy of Indian residential schools. Additional learning opportunities for staff included a Summer Doc Series and tours of the Chedoke Collection of Inuit Art at the Art Gallery of Hamilton.

- **Policy Development:**

A separate staff working group also worked collaboratively to develop a Use of Indigenous Medicines Policy and Procedure. This policy is one the first such policies for a Canadian municipality.

## EVENTS

- **Indigenous Community Conversation:**

The Coordinating Circle held a community conversation on reconciliation with Indigenous community members on December 13, 2017 at the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre. 41 participants came and shared their experiences and views on what reconciliation means to them and what should happen in Hamilton. Educating City staff and the general public about Indigenous history and intergenerational trauma was a major recommendation.

- **Community Conversation featuring the KAIROS Blanket Exercise:**

The Coordinating Circle hosted a KAIROS Blanket Exercise on March 19, 2018 which invited residents and staff to build their awareness and become engaged in a conversation on reconciliation. Over 100 people participated in the exercise, and comments shared about their experience revealed the public good that comes from education.

- **“Bringing the City to the Community” Information Fair:**

Indigenous community members stated that the City of Hamilton needs to do better to get out in the community. Holding an Information Fair for the community provided the opportunity to learn through action. This one day event brought over 20 different City of Hamilton programs and initiatives to Indigenous community members. The key learnings from the event were the benefits of staff-community interaction in a relaxed environment; having multiple services and programs involved; and the importance of proactive engagement with the community.

## **YOUTH**

In order to fully address reconciliation now and into the future, it is important to listen to the voices of youth. The Urban Indigenous Strategy has engaged youth in all gatherings and events to share their feedback. During Phase Two, a workshop titled “Youth Shaping Spirit in Hamilton” brought young Indigenous people together to provide their thoughts on activities that support the strategic theme of Spirit (described on page 24).

In February 2018, the youth representatives of the Coordinating Circle, Nicole Jones and Micheal Forrest, attended the Canadian Roots Youth Reconciliation Conference in Sudbury, Ontario. The conference hosted over 250 youth participants, who aim to facilitate sharing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth, encourage youth to engage in interactive dialogues on the significance of solidarity and reconciliation, and challenge negative stereotypes that divide communities. Micheal and Nicole facilitated a workshop about looking at the Truth and Reconciliation’s Commissions Call to Actions in relation to the teachings of the Anishinabek Medicine Wheel.

## **URBAN INDIGENOUS STRATEGY SURVEY**

The Urban Indigenous Strategy Survey was conducted to gather community input to identify action items that the Strategy should

focus on over the next 2 to 5 years to strengthen its relationship with Indigenous community members. The survey was available online between May 1, 2018 and June 30, 2018. Paper copies of the survey were also distributed at various events in the Indigenous community including, for example, the Celebration of Growth on May 17, 2018, and the Soaring Spirits Festival on June 22-24, 2018. In total, 513 fully or partially completed surveys were collected.

The survey provided rich information that has greatly shaped the actions identified in the Urban Indigenous Strategy. The survey findings, along with the input gathered at community events have been organized in three strategic themes; Land, People and Spirit. When asked to rank a number of activities that match the themes of Land, People and Spirit, survey participants were clear to indicate that all activities were equally important and must be moved on by the City. In addition, meaningful consultation and involvement of Indigenous people in decision-making was shown to be a key priority. Other common recommendations revealed that the City should play a role in public education, involve more Elders in services like health care and restore Indigenous place names on street signs, parks, and maps.

An important snapshot of the negative experiences that many Indigenous community members have had was gathered. Indigenous participants were asked to report the frequency of discrimination they experienced in the last two years and if the frequency has changed at all in that time. The majority of Indigenous participants in this survey reported experiences of discrimination based on their Indigenous identity. These experiences more often occurred in the broader community, as opposed to when accessing City services. Nevertheless, the amount of discrimination experienced is enough of a call to action for the City of Hamilton. The findings of the Urban Indigenous Strategy have shown that the City of Hamilton has a major role to play in truth and reconciliation at the local level. Community members are looking for concrete actions that contribute to eliminating discrimination and increasing respect.

# STRATEGIC THEMES & ACTIONS

As a way of understanding how the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and community input fit together, the Urban Indigenous Strategy will use the strategic themes of Land, People and Spirit. These themes were chosen as a way to take a municipal action plan and connect it to an Indigenous understanding of the relationships humans have to land, to each other, and spirituality.

Having completed this process, the Coordinating Circle is confident that the identified strategic actions are needed to build and maintain respectful relationships with Indigenous people. There are some examples where the City of Hamilton has already begun to take action and these examples will provide lessons and leadership to the actions that will soon begin.

## LAND

The Land theme is about acknowledging and respecting the spiritual, mental, physical and emotional connections that Indigenous people have to land. This connection extends into Indigenous knowledge, governance, language, and relationships with non-Indigenous organizations. It recognizes that the first relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada were focused on the sharing, use, and stewardship of land.

### Key Directions:

- The City of Hamilton should adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as the framework to move forward with reconciliation.
- Indigenous people must be involved in decision-making in municipal activities that affect them.
- Consultation with urban Indigenous people and with local First Nations communities must be meaningful.



- Urban Indigenous people need a space outdoors for gathering, practicing sacred ceremonies and sharing teachings.
- Care for the environment, including the land and water, are important. Respecting Indigenous ecological knowledge will benefit environmental restoration and preservation in Hamilton.
- Acknowledgment of traditional Indigenous territory in Hamilton should be practised across the city. The City needs to demonstrate this acknowledgement beyond words.



**“We need to understand what stories and messages are important to the Indigenous community and their ancestors.”**

## LAND THEME ACTIONS

	ACTION	TIME FRAME
<b>1</b>	Develop guidance and policy tools for senior leaders and staff about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>2</b>	Raise awareness and strengthen the role of the Hamilton Aboriginal Advisory Committee.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>3</b>	Improve meaningful consultation with urban Indigenous residents and First Nations communities on municipal projects, plans and approvals.	Medium Term (3-5 years)
<b>4</b>	Include and listen to Indigenous Elders on key initiatives and partnerships between the City of Hamilton and the Indigenous community.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>5</b>	Show respect for traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) by including Indigenous voices in environmental leadership and incorporating TEK in municipal practises.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>6</b>	Work with the Indigenous community to establish and maintain a piece of land that the community can use for ceremonial, spiritual and other activities.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>7</b>	Work with Indigenous communities to provide education to staff and residents about acknowledging traditional territories in Hamilton.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>8</b>	Understand how concepts such as the Doctrine of Discovery affect municipal decision making and develop tools to reform those processes.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>9</b>	Create more opportunities to access traditional foods.	Medium Term (3-5 years)
<b>10</b>	Increase outreach to Indigenous residents to access conservation areas.	Short Term (1-2 years)

## SPIRIT

The Spirit theme embodies how Indigenous contributions and experiences, including the Indian residential school system, are honoured and commemorated. This may involve exploring archives to shed light on untold histories and how Indigenous people and histories are visibly represented in the City.

### Key Directions:

- The City of Hamilton can do more to visually represent the historic and continuing presence of Indigenous peoples.
- Indigenous art in public spaces is needed to honour historic and contemporary contributions.
- Increase support for Indigenous artists and art programming.
- Indigenous cultures and traditions need to be respected and seen as more than a performance.
- Indigenous stories and languages need to be seen as part of Hamilton’s heritage.
- More can be done to celebrate National Indigenous History Month in Hamilton.

## SPIRIT THEME ACTIONS

	ACTION	TIME FRAME
11	Incorporate more Indigenous stories and voices into the City of Hamilton’s culture and heritage plans.	Medium Term (3-5 years)
12	Use markers and signs to restore Indigenous names and identify significant Indigenous landmarks in Hamilton. This could include street names, trails, and parks.	Short Term (1-2 years)
13	Create opportunities for public art by Indigenous artists.	Short Term (1-2 years)

	ACTION	TIME FRAME
<b>14</b>	Establish an Indigenous Cultural Centre that offers interpretive programming, provides a gathering space for Indigenous peoples to practice their ceremonies and hold cultural events.	Medium Term (3-5 years)
<b>15</b>	Update the City's grant programs to provide small grants to residents and community groups who are making a difference in reconciliation.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>16</b>	Raise local Indigenous flags permanently at City Hall.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>17</b>	Bring together Indigenous artists with youth to create a mural or other forms of street art.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>18</b>	Ensure that Indigenous stories and local Indigenous history are included in official archives across Hamilton.	Medium Term (3-5 years)
<b>19</b>	Continue to improve how the City works with First Nations when conducting archaeology. This will include identifying how to educate the public on the rich archaeological history in Hamilton.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>20</b>	Expand the promotion and celebration of Indigenous History Month at City Hall and across Hamilton.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>21</b>	Identify or create ways to support Indigenous artists.	Short Term (1-2 years)
<b>22</b>	Commission public art in a prominent location that honours mutual respect and the spirit of reconciliation.	Medium Term (3-5 years)



## PEOPLE

The People theme embodies how Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples build mutually respectful relationships in every day settings. This can include how services are provided and are accessible to Indigenous people, housing, employment, and support for Indigenous people in the workplace.

### Key Directions:

- Use public education to increase understanding and break down stereotypes and racism.
- The City of Hamilton should become a leader for other corporations and institutions in increasing employment opportunities for Indigenous people.
- City employees should be mandated to have a cultural understanding.
- Be creative about how to deliver mainstream services to Indigenous peoples in culturally appropriate ways.

## PEOPLE THEMED ACTIONS

	ACTION	TIME FRAME
23	Bring together partners to offer public education to all residents about the history of Indigenous people and current topics that will contribute to reconciliation. This public education program should include highlighting local Indigenous resources and museums and promote awareness of national holidays such as National Indigenous Peoples Day and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.	Short Term (1-2 years)
24	Enable City staff to deliver City services in a culturally-appropriate way.	Short Term (1-2 years)
25	Launch a program for Indigenous youth to gain employment and training experience at the City.	Short Term (1-2 years)

	ACTION	TIME FRAME
26	Identify and eliminate municipal barriers that prevent Indigenous people from carrying out ceremonial practises in public spaces.	Short Term (1-2 years)
27	Support the expansion of Indigenous early childhood education.	Short Term (1-2 years)
28	Increase access to recreation for Indigenous children, youth and families.	Medium Term (3-5 years)
29	Provide education to all City staff about Indigenous people, Indigenous-settler history, treaties, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This education should also cover the urban Indigenous community in Hamilton and the history of traditional territory in the Hamilton area.	Short Term (1-2 years)
30	Ensure Public Health programs respect Indigenous medicines and healing practices.	Short Term (1-2 years)
31	Increase the number Indigenous health-care professionals in Hamilton.	Long Term (6+ years)
32	Support Indigenous people to have more access to Elders and spiritual teachings.	Medium Term (3-5 years)
33	Create opportunities for young Indigenous athletes to develop their skills.	Medium Term (3-5 years)
34	Increase opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents to play Indigenous sports and recreation activities.	Long Term (6+ years)
35	Work with local Indigenous communities to host major sports events for Indigenous athletes.	Long Term (6+ years)

	ACTION	TIME FRAME
36	Increase the number of Indigenous employees at the City and support networking and mentorship opportunities for Indigenous staff.	Short Term (1-2 years)
37	Use the City's Age-Friendly Plan to support Indigenous seniors with accessing health and community services.	Medium Term (3-5 years)
38	Identify how to increase accessible and affordable housing for Indigenous people through the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan.	Short Term (1-2 years)
39	Require social housing providers and boards to be educated on Indigenous peoples and history, colonialism, treaties, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This education should also include information on the Indigenous community in Hamilton.	Short Term (1-2 years)
40	Provide opportunities for Indigenous people to understand their rights as tenants.	Short Term (1-2 years)



# IMPLEMENTATION

The path to reconciliation is long and comes with understanding that some of our successes will not be seen by us but by future generations. Nevertheless, to keep the momentum going and the commitment strong, it is necessary to measure our progress along the way. The City of Hamilton will be accountable to the community by providing annual updates on our collective progress. Conducting follow up surveys will also help us to measure progress.

The City is also committed to continuing to consult with the Indigenous community as we move into the implementation phase. Community presentations and talking circles will continue to allow everyone to have a voice and be part of the journey towards reconciliation.

It is also important to note that the success of the Urban Indigenous Strategy depends on the commitment and engagement of staff across the corporation, as the recommendations involve action by all City departments. As such, staff have begun the process of reaching out to various City departments to share the recommendations and begin the development of an implementation plan. The implementation plan, which will be shared back with the community and Council by the end of 2019, will identify timelines, roles, and specific actions to address the recommendations of the Urban Indigenous Strategy.

The City of Hamilton is committed to the strengthening its relationship with the Indigenous community. Work has already begun on some of the recommendations in the Urban Indigenous Strategy, however there is a recognition that we are still early in a long journey towards reconciliation.



**“Provide training to City employees, police, and child welfare that is led by Indigenous trainers and addresses topics such as implicit bias, systemic racism and colonialism.”**



# GRATITUDE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The development of the Urban Indigenous Strategy would not have been possible without the support, encouragement and contributions made by the following individuals and organizations:

- Hamilton Executive Directors Aboriginal Coalition
- Hamilton Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- Hamilton Public Library
- Art Gallery of Hamilton
- McMaster University, Equity and Inclusion Office
- Professional Aboriginal Advocacy and Networking Group
- Hamilton Regional Indian Centre
- Native Women's Centre
- Niagara Peninsula Aboriginal Area Management Board
- Branches of Native Development
- Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg
- Hamilton Community Legal Clinic
- De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre
- Mayor and Members of Council
- Hamilton's Youth Strategy
- Our Future Hamilton
- Staff Circle on Indigenous Relations members
- Hamilton Street Railway (HSR)
- Ontario Works
- Human Resources–Talent and Diversity
- Public Health

## GRATITUDE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- McQuesten Urban Farm
- Housing Services
- Fire Prevention Office
- Age-Friendly Strategy
- Heritage, Tourism & Culture
- Red Hill Valley Joint Stewardship Board
- Recreation
- Early Years System
- Experience Annex
- Matthew Green
- Aidan Johnson
- Hamilton Water
- Senior Leadership Team
- Michelle Williams
- Viola Mueller
- Andy Zimmerman
- Jodi Koch
- Betsy Pocop
- Rick Hill
- Elaine Lee
- Cher Obediah
- Shane Pennells
- Jasmin Glaw
- Valerie King
- Young Ogichidaa Singers
- Val Kerr
- Nicky Bomberry
- Selby Harris
- Eulene Victoria Bomberry
- Bernadette Arthur
- Jackie Labonte
- Rene Thomas-Hill
- Kelly Johnathan
- Bryce Kanbara
- Wilamina McGrimmond
- Rod Nettagog and Bradlee Henry
- Vanessa Henry
- Gage Park Diner

**“Highlight profiles of Indigenous people in Hamilton making a positive influence in their communities as a way of combating stereotypes and stigmas.”**





**“Incorporate Indigenous stewardship principles and respect traditional ecological knowledge; more Indigenous leadership and management of lands.”**



# APPENDIX A: TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION CALLS TO ACTION

The following are the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report's Calls to Action that are being addressed through the Hamilton Urban Indigenous Strategy.

For the purposes of developing the Hamilton Urban Indigenous Strategy, the Calls to Action have been grouped into strategic themes of Land, People and Spirit.

**The Land** - this theme includes Calls to Action that acknowledge Indigenous peoples as the original nations of this land and who have knowledge, governance structures and rights to live peacefully in this territory.

**43** We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

**44** We call upon the Government of Canada to develop a national action plan, strategies, and any other concrete measures to achieve the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**47** We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.

## The Land

**92** We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.

**93** We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the national Aboriginal organizations, to revise the information kit for newcomers to Canada and its citizenship test to reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal Peoples of Canada, information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools.

**The People** - this theme includes Calls to Action that look after the people, whether it is in providing services to residents, employment and education of people.

**12** We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.

**17** We call upon all levels of government to enable residential school survivors and their families to reclaim names changed by the residential school system by waiving administrative costs for a period of five-years for the name change process and the revision of identity documents, such as birth certificates, passports, driver's licences, health cards, status cards, and social insurance numbers.

## The People

**22** We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients.

**23** We call upon all levels of government to:

- i. Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health care field.
- ii. Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health care providers in Aboriginal communities.
- iii. Provide cultural competency training for all health care professionals.

**57** We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

**88** We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth, and continued support for the North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host the games and for provincial and territorial team preparation and travel.

**The Spirit** - this theme includes Calls to Actions that honour the history and the spirit of the survivors and ancestors.

- 75** We call upon the federal government to work with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, churches, Aboriginal communities, former residential school students, and current landowners to develop and implement strategies and procedures for the ongoing identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries or other sites at which residential school children were buried. This is to include the provision of appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased children.
- 77** We call upon provincial, territorial, municipal, and community archives to work collaboratively with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to identify and collect copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system, and to provide these to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.
- 78** We call upon the Government of Canada to commit to making a funding contribution of \$10 million over seven years to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, plus an additional amount to assist communities to research and produce histories of their own residential school experience and their involvement of truth, healing and reconciliation.
- 79** We call upon the Federal Government, in collaboration with survivors, Aboriginal Organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration.
- 80** We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.
- 87** We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organizations, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history.



# “More recognition and celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day/Month.”















