

TERMS OF REFERENCE

BCMC Aboriginal Partnership and Reconciliation Working Group

February, 2016

Introduction

The final report from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) provided 94 recommendations to acknowledge and address the historical trauma and cultural genocide inflicted against Aboriginal people of Canada as a result of the Indian Residential School System. While all Canadians and all orders of government have a role to play in the reconciliation process, the report includes at least five recommendations that directly relate to municipal governments. To date, these have been identified as:

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.

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.

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.

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.

According to the TRC final report, "Reconciliation must inspire Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples to transform Canadian society so that our children and grandchildren can live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share."

In response, at its June 4, 2015 meeting in Edmonton, FCM's Big City Mayor's Caucus approved the following motion moved by the City of Edmonton mayor, Don Iveson:

That the Big City Mayor's Caucus strike the BCMC Aboriginal Partnership and Reconciliation Working Group and that the first order of business for the Working Group be to develop a Terms of Reference to explore, with the aim of developing concrete actions, the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that explicitly recognize the role of local government and bring this Terms of Reference to the next full meeting of the Big City Mayor's Caucus

Objective

The Working Group is established to provide leadership around the following issues:

- Recommendations from the TRC final report that municipalities can take action on, with this work to include:
 - Thorough identification and analysis of TRC recommendations relevant to municipal governments.
 - Timely identification and development of proposals for potential implementation and action.
- Promoting and disseminating across the municipal sector, research and best practices to developing and implementing policies and practices related to reconciliation and enhancing the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians living in urban centres; and
- Identifying areas of federal and municipal collaboration.

Mandate and Reporting

1. The Working Group (WG) will provide direction and support to FCM and supporting municipal staff from identified WG members, for the development and execution of a work plan and identified actions/objectives.
2. The Work plan of the WG is expected to be carried out over the 2015-2016 year.
3. The Working Group will report to the BCMC and provide regular updates on its activities.

Composition and staffing

The Working Group will be made up of a Chair and Vice-Chair as appointed by the Chair of the Big City Mayor's Caucus and will include as many members as are interested. Chairs are encouraged to recruit members at any time to ensure the most effective representation on the Working Group. Chairs are responsible for setting the direction of the Working Group with the input from the members, acting as the liaison with relevant FCM and BCMC staff and are accountable for bringing the outputs and recommendations from the working group to the BCMC. The Chair and Vice Chair may be called on as public spokespeople for the Working Group either in a conference or media setting, for example.

The Working Group will have the support of one FCM policy staff lead and at least one BCMC staff lead, preferably from the office of the Chair of the working group. All

member cities will provide staff resources to support the process when possible and as necessary.

Recommended Meeting Schedule

It is recommended that the members of the Working Group meet a minimum of twice yearly and beyond that, on an as needed with staff representatives meeting monthly.