



London
CANADA

OFFICE
OF MAYOR
MATT BROWN

June 1, 2018

Dear Members of the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee:

Re: Indigenous Relations Working Group

On October 17, 2017, Municipal Council resolved to establish an Indigenous Relations Working Group with an approved Terms of Reference. Subsequent to the approval, concerns were raised by our First Nations' partners regarding the absence of consultation with them with respect to the establishment of the Working Group. Leaders from our three neighbouring First Nations have reached out to me with respect to this matter. Attached to this communication are letters from the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames and Munsee Delaware Nation in response to London City Council's proposed Indigenous Relations Working Group.

As you will note in the attached letters, several suggestions are being presented for our consideration. These suggestions include engaging an external facilitator, acceptable to all parties, to assist in identifying commonalities between the parties from which a terms of reference could be established for the proposed Working Group. The proposed Working Group would then establish a schedule of meetings.

I am therefore requesting support of the following recommendation:

That the following actions be taken with respect to the Indigenous Relations Working Group:

a) the attached letters from the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames and Munsee Delaware Nation
BE RECEIVED;

b) that in accordance with section 13.2 of the Council Procedure By-law the Municipal Council decision of October 17, 2017 with respect to clause 2 of the 17th Report of the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee, **BE RECONSIDERED;**

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c) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to retain an external facilitator, acceptable to all parties, to assist in identifying commonalities between the parties from which a terms of reference could be established for the proposed Working Group; and,

d) upon completion of c) above, the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to consult with the Administration of the First Nations to establish a meeting schedule for the Working Group.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Matt Brown

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CHIPPEWAS OF THE THAMES FIRST NATION



April 3, 2018

To London City Council,

On behalf of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, I submit this letter in response to the desire to establish an Indigenous Relations Working Group with members of London City Council.

While we understand and appreciate the desire to move the relationship between our communities forward in a more formal way, we are deeply concerned that the direction chosen by your council was taken without consultation with First Nations Communities in the London area.

For any meaningful relationship to develop and grow, trust must first be established. Through three years of continued conversations with Mayor Brown and Councillor Cassidy, our communities have worked to establish trust. We believe we have developed a plan that will allow us to work towards a more formal relationship.

As a first step, we request a meeting with a designated and mutually agreed upon facilitator to identify the shared priorities of our two communities in order to develop a framework to establish the Indigenous Working Group.

Chippewas of the Thames First Nation is happy to work toward a greater relationship with the City of London.

Sincerely,

Myeengun Henry

Ogimaa (Chief) Chippewas of the Thames First Nation

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April 3rd, 2018

Mayor Matt Brown
The City of London
300 Dufferin Street
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Dear Mayor Brown:

Shekoli Swakwe:ku. I hope that this letter finds you in good spirit and health. I am writing this letter to you as a follow up to our meeting a few weeks ago in our office. First of all, we would like to thank you for your outreach and for taking the time to meet with me and several of our Council members. The meeting was a long time in coming, but I am glad that we have finally had the opportunity to meet.

The original purpose of our meeting was to finally meet with you in person to discuss a path to the establishment of a new relationship with the surrounding First Nations, including the Oneida Nation of the Thames. Our Nation and people are part of a larger Confederacy, the "Iroquois Confederacy" and we are the "Haudenosaunee". While the Confederacy exists for the collective, each Nation still remains an independent entity. We are Onyota'a:ka – the people of the Standing Stone.

Our Settlement, located approximately 25 kms southwest from the City of London, has been in existence since 1839. Our ancestors were forcibly removed from our historical lands located in what is now New York State. After support for the American forces in their wars for Independence, our reward was a racist expulsion from our territory. Several hundred of our people came to the "Beaver Hunting grounds", a land tract that covered millions of acres, including what is known as southwestern Ontario, to establish our Settlement.

We have heard, via the news, and from one of your council members (Ms. Maureen Cassidy), of your Council's efforts to accept, adopt and implement several of the recommendations that stem from the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner's report. Well, I applaud any positive efforts to reconcile with First Nations communities and peoples, we remain cautious regarding the timing and method being considered for your reconciliation efforts. Although 'WE' cannot and will not dictate to the City of London regarding their own processes and priorities, we would ask that you respectfully slow the pace of your development of an Indigenous working group until you have fully consulted with the First Nations people to assist in its design and mandate. Only then will this initiative achieve success.

“People of the Standing Stone”

The Oneida Nation of the Thames elected Chief and Council wish to establish this new working relationship with the City of London. However, we would like to establish that relationship independent and separate from any other agreement or relationship that may have been established with other local First Nations. Although we are all neighbors, we all come from different cultures and experiences.

At our preliminary meeting, we had the opportunity to discuss many topics that could be the focal point of relationship issues, and positive progress for future endeavors. We also discussed some of the more challenging and troubling aspects of being an urban First Nations person. We also suggested that it may be appropriate to have an informal meet and greet between our two Councils, as a first step.

Mayor Brown, thank you for your consideration and attention regarding the contents of this letter, I await your positive response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Phillips', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Elected Chief Randall Phillips,
Oneida Nation of the Thames.

cc: Oneida Council

cc: Councillor Cassidy

April 30th, 2018

Mayor Matt Brown and London City Council,

I am writing on behalf of Munsee-Delaware Nation in regards to the motion to establish an Indigenous Relations Working Group with local First Nations representatives and members of London City Council.

These efforts to move the relationship between are communities forward are important, however we are deeply concerned that the direction chosen by your City Council was taken without consultation or dialogue with our First Nations communities.

For this to work proceed and for any meaningful relationship to form there first must be established trust. Our community has done so over much time with both Mayor Matt Brown and Councillor Maureen Cassidy.

We look forward to expanding on that and we believe we have a solution that allows us to work toward a moral formal relationship over time, but this must be a collaborative effort.

To move these efforts forward we are requesting a meeting with a facilitator, chosen by both parties. This person will then identify the shared priorities of our communities and set out a framework for the proposed Indigenous Working Group.

Respectfully submitted,

Chief Roger Thomas

Munsee Delaware Nation