

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON JANUARY 20, 2020
FROM:	LYNNE LIVINGSTONE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT:	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE N'AMERIND FRIENDSHIP CENTRE AND THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF LONDON

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, the following report **BE RECEIVED** for information.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

- None.

BACKGROUND

Oral history and archeological records show that the London region has been inhabited for over 10,000 years. The Indigenous peoples who have called this region home for millennia include the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Lenni-Lenape Nations.

The N'Amerind Friendship Centre plays a significant role in the urban Indigenous community in London. In addition to hosting a variety of culturally appropriate programming for urban Indigenous residents of London, it serves as a centre for education, culture and overall community development. The City of London recognizes the importance of the role that the N'Amerind Friendship Centre plays.

DISCUSSION

In 2019, representatives from the N'Amerind Friendship Centre (N'Amerind), the City of London and the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) worked to develop the attached Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The purpose of the MOU is to formally strengthen the relationship between the administrations of N'Amerind and the City of London and to achieve greater impact in the lives of urban Indigenous people in the City of London through strategically partnering resources and sharing expertise when possible.

The MOU includes the following principles which outline how this work will be undertaken:

- a) Respect for Indigenous Cultures and Spiritualities: Indigenous expertise in Indigenous cultures is recognized, and community-based approaches are understood as essentially linked to positive outcomes.
- b) Respect for Indigenous Diversity: The distinction and diversity of Indigenous people across Ontario is recognized and respected.
- c) Driven by Community: Community-identified needs and priorities provide the basis for policy and program development.

- d) Collaboration and Co-Development: Recognition of the value of Indigenous expertise to design, plan, implement and evaluate policy and programs that impact the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. Recognition of the mutual benefit from community partnership and the best utilization of resources to reach the common goal of improving the lives of Indigenous people in London.

The implementation of the MOU includes the following areas of focus:

- a) Relationship Building and Maintenance;
- b) Collaboration; and,
- c) Communication and Information Exchange.

Through these areas of focus, N’Amerind and the City of London commit to: engaging one another on shared interests and objectives (both current and emerging); developing a mutual understanding of the structures, roles and responsibilities of each organization; collaborating across relevant policy and program areas in the interests of urban Indigenous people in London; and, creating increased opportunities for knowledge exchange and ongoing communication.

In addition to establishing an open line of communication and dialogue between the organizations, on a bi-annual basis, the Executive Director of N’Amerind and the City Manager and/or Deputy City Manager of the City of London will meet to discuss the above-noted items. An annual review of the MOU will take place as part of these meetings in order to assess the impact of the MOU and identify any potential changes or updates that may be required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial impacts as a result of this MOU.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Council’s Strategic Plan for the City of London, 2019-2023, identifies ‘Leading in Public Service’ as a Strategic Area of Focus. This Strategic Area of Focus includes the outcome ‘The City of London is trusted, open, and accountable in service of our community’ and the expected result ‘Building relationships with Indigenous peoples that are respectful, transparent, responsive and accountable.’

CONCLUSION

The City of London is committed to being a responsive and modern service partner, fostering change to build a better London for all. The establishment of a MOU between the administrations of N’Amerind and the City of London will strengthen the relationship between the organizations and achieve greater impact in improving the lives of urban Indigenous people in the City of London.

Acknowledgements: Thanks and appreciation is extended to Louloua Habli from the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres for her guidance and support in the development of this MOU.

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APPENDIX A

Memorandum of Understanding

N'Amerind Friendship Centre and City of London Corporation

Purpose: to formally strengthen the relationship existing between the N'Amerind Friendship Centre and The Corporation of the City of London and to achieve greater impact in improving the lives of urban Indigenous people in the City of London through strategically partnering resources and sharing expertise when possible.

Roles and Responsibilities:

N'Amerind Friendship Centre

The N'Amerind Friendship Centre plays a significant role in the urban Indigenous community as a centre for education, culture and site of community development. N'Amerind hosts a variety of culturally-appropriate programming for urban Indigenous residents of London, spanning all stages of the lifecycle. Through its work with community members and as part of the broader Friendship Centre Movement, N'Amerind is uniquely positioned to understand what the needs of London's Indigenous community are and meet those needs through partnerships with mainstream service providers and municipalities such as the City of London.

Corporation of the City of London

Oral history and archeological records show that the London region has been inhabited for over 10,000 years. The Indigenous peoples who have called this region home for millennia include the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Lenni-Lenape Nations. The City of London was founded in 1826, and was quickly established as an administrative and military centre in the region. London's geographic position and strong manufacturing sector ensured continued growth through the 20th century, with major annexation of local communities occurring in 1961. London continues to play a key role as a regional hub for Southwest Ontario, a region of 2.5 million people. The City of London is committed to being a responsive and modern service partner, fostering change to build a better London for all.

Principles:

- a) **Respect for Indigenous Cultures and Spiritualities:** Indigenous expertise in Indigenous cultures is recognized, and community-based approaches are understood as essentially linked to positive outcomes.
- b) **Respect for Indigenous Diversity:** The distinction and diversity of Indigenous people across Ontario is recognized and respected.
- c) **Driven by Community:** Community-identified needs and priorities provide the basis for policy and program development.
- d) **Collaboration and Co-Development:** Recognition of the value of Indigenous expertise to design, plan, implement and evaluate policy and programs that impact the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. Recognition of the mutual benefit from community partnership and the best utilization of resources to reach the common goal of improving the lives of Indigenous people in London.

Implementation:

1) Relationship-Building and Maintenance

N'Amerind and the City of London commit to engage with one another in legislative, policy and programmatic areas where we share interests or objectives. N'Amerind and the City of London commit to facilitate a mutual understanding of their organizational structure, their roles and responsibilities in the community, and any emerging opportunities to collaborate and increase the scope and impact of our programming. Engagement will include:

- a) Bi-Annual meetings between the Executive Director of N'Amerind and the City of London's City Manager and/or Deputy City Manager. The City Manager and/or Deputy City Manager and N'Amerind's Executive Director will work together to set the agendas.
- b) Annual reviews of the Memorandum of Understanding as part of the biannual meetings between N'Amerind and City of London. These reviews will include an evaluative element that assesses our progress in implementing the principles and action items of this MOU and discuss any necessary changes that need to be made to the agreement to reflect our relationship as it develops.

2) Collaboration

N'Amerind and the City of London agree to collaborate across relevant policy and program areas in the interests of urban Indigenous people in London. Such activities may include identifying future opportunities for mutual support and partnership in areas of mutual concern, such as but not limited to:

- a. Addressing the housing and homelessness challenges faced particularly by Indigenous residents in London, through initiatives such as the Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound Program;
- b. Facilitating greater access to culturally-appropriate children and youth services and programming for urban Indigenous communities in London;
- c. Addressing the lack of culturally-safe employment and social assistance services for urban Indigenous communities in London;
- d. Increasing awareness, education and cultural competency in the City of London;
- e. Identifying emerging opportunities and issues.

3) Communication and Information Exchange:

N'Amerind and the City of London will work together towards creating increased opportunities for knowledge exchange and ongoing communication. This involves sharing relevant program and policy information, and consistent communication between City of London and N'Amerind staff as required.