



Monday August 23, 2021

Chair and Members
Corporate Services Committee

Colleagues:

The Federal government has declared September 30th to be a statutory holiday: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. In spirit of this recognition, the Friendship Agreement with N'Ameriend Centre, and bringing further attention and awareness to recent discoveries of residential school unmarked graves, an "Every Child Matters" flag will be raised on the Community Flag Pole on September 30th, 2021.

Municipal support for Truth and Reconciliation was a topic of the recent Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) Board of Directors' meeting on August 14, 2021. Attached to this communication is the background information provided through AMO.

To further support these steps toward reconciliation, I am requesting the following:

"That the following actions be taken with respect to the attached information from the AMO Board of Directors meeting of August 14, 2021, related to municipal support for truth and reconciliation:

- a) the above-noted information BE FORWARDED to the Civic Administration for consideration; and,
- b) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to report back to a future meeting of the appropriate standing committee with potential actions for the Municipal Council to consider, including but not limited to, amendments to the Flags at City Hall Policy."

Sincerely,



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To: AMO Board of Directors
From: Monika Turner, Director of Policy
Date: August 14, 2021
Subject: **Municipal Support for Truth and Reconciliation**

ISSUE:

AMO members have been asking how municipal governments leaders and staff can be more supportive and be part of the healing, learning, and restoration needed to support reconciliation with our Indigenous friends, neighbours, and communities. Municipal leaders are being looked to in order to set the tone and be part of the constructive societal change that is needed and expected.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the AMO Board receive and approve the two draft resource papers attached, which were received and reviewed by the Indigenous Relations Task Force on July 15th, 2021

- 1) The first resource paper provides an overview of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC's) Calls to Action that municipalities can address.

The second resource paper provides ideas and options for what municipal leaders/councils can do to better support and engage their Indigenous residents and neighbours at this time.

After AMO Board approval and after the conference, an AMO policy update and resources could be sent out to members and posted on the AMO website.

- 2) That the AMO Board encourage its members to recognize September 30th as National Orange Shirt Day with the adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its final report on June 2, 2015, which included 94 Calls to Action to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation;

AND WHEREAS the recent discoveries of remains and unmarked graves across Canada have led to increased calls for all levels of government to address the recommendations in the TRC's Calls to Action;

AND WHEREAS all Canadians and all orders of government have a role to play in reconciliation;

AND WHEREAS Recommendation #80 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission called upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process;

AND WHEREAS the Federal Government has announced September 30th, 2021 as the first National Orange Shirt Day and a statutory holiday;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the [municipality] of [placename] does hereby commit to recognizing September 30th, 2021, as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (National Orange Shirt Day) by sharing the stories of residential school survivors, their families, and communities.

BACKGROUND:

Recent discoveries of remains and unmarked graves across Western Canada has led to increased calls for all levels of government to immediately address the recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action.

All Canadians and all orders of government have a role to play in reconciliation. The TRC's 94 Calls to Action are addressed primarily to the federal, provincial, and territorial governments but also to municipal governments, the corporate sector, and the broader Canadian society. They cover a wide range of government responsibilities, including child welfare, education, language and culture, health, justice, commemoration, museums and archives, training for public servants, and a few specific initiatives related to reconciliation.

These AMO resource papers are meant to be organic and to be revised/updated when appropriate and more municipal resource materials are available.

Prepared by: Lianne Sauter, Policy Advisor
Approved by: Monika Turner, Director of Policy

Proposed AMO Resource paper regarding Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action – Draft for AMO Board’s consideration August 2021

Issue:

Recent discoveries of remains and unmarked graves across Western Canada has led to increased calls for all levels of government to address the recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC’s) Calls to Action.

All Canadians and all orders of government have a role to play in reconciliation. The TRC’s 94 Calls to Action are addressed primarily to the federal, provincial, and territorial governments but also to municipal governments, the corporate sector, and the broader Canadian society. They cover a wide range of government responsibilities, including child welfare, education, language and culture, health, justice, commemoration, museums and archives, training for public servants, and a number of specific initiatives related to reconciliation.

Recommendations:

Through the work of the Indigenous Relations Task Force (IRTF), various options for responding to the Calls to Action will come forward. It is important to note that this is only the beginning of our work on responding to the TRC’s Calls for Action. AMO will continue to update this resource document as municipalities share their experiences and we can incorporate responses across the province into this work.

Options include the following:

- AMO support for Council and Staff training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.
- AMO encouragement of its members to recognize September 30th as National Orange Shirt Day and the flying of the *Every Child Matters* flag for the month of September at municipal offices.
- AMO exploration of the form and scope of formal and informal relationship agreements between municipal governments and First Nations.

AMO’s ongoing work with Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) under our 2020 MOU on policy matters of mutual interest supports these recommendations.

Analysis:

On June 2, 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Committee released its final report which included 94 Calls to Action to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation.

In the six years since the Calls to Action were published, there have been only incremental changes and attempts by all levels of government to implement the recommendations.

Municipal Impact and Role to Play in NCTR Calls to Action

TRC Call to Action	Call to Action	Staff Comments
3.	We call upon all levels of government to fully implement Jordan's Principle.	Jordan's Principle makes sure all First Nations children living in Canada can access the products, services and supports they need, when they need them. Funding can help with a wide range of health, social and educational needs, including the unique needs that First Nations Two-Spirit and LGBTQQIA children and youth and those with disabilities may have.
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 official identity documents, such as birth certificates, passports, driver's licenses, health cards, status cards, and	Could be costs at the municipal level associated with commissioning documents (10\$ to 25\$ for example) to facilitate this process.
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 <i>terra nullius</i> , and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.	Rights based discussion with respect to land claims, etc. Municipal role could vary based on local experiences and situations with recognition that municipal governments have no authority or expertise in areas regarding Indigenous rights. That is in the domain of the Crown – Provincial
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 <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i> , Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights,	AMO could facilitate this or encourage development of training for municipal staff and elected officials. Many cities have adopted UNDRIP
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	Municipalities with archives and museums

Draft for Discussion

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.	The Federal Government has announced September 30 th , 2021, as the first National Orange Shirt Day. AMO has committed to recognizing September 30 th as a statutory holiday. AMO members should be encouraged to do the same.
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.	Role for municipalities with recreation programs.
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	Role for municipalities with recreation programs.

Municipal governments across the country are implementing various responses to the recommendations. Here are samples of activities undertaken:

I. Treaty 20–Greater Peterborough Area

This partnership has taken a regional approach to First Nation-municipal collaboration, bringing two First Nations, two townships, a regional government, and an economic development corporation together.

Accomplishments of Treaty 20

- All councils and boards have passed resolutions committing to CEDI from 2017-2020.
- Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations now sitting as partners on the County of Peterborough’s Official Plan Technical Advisory Committee.
- Co-organized an educational event about the 200th anniversary of Treaty 20 that engaged Indigenous youth and Indigenous knowledge keepers.
- Co-presented at the FCM Annual Conference and Trade Show in Quebec City, June 2019.
- Signed Ezhi-Wijikiwendiyang (Friendship Accord), November 2019.
- The partnership and the Friendship Accord are featured in a [video](#) that was filmed by Indigenous Services Canada.
- Had a Wampum Belt created in March 2020 to honour their commitment to their partnership.

2. London, Ontario

- The City of London is developing plans to address TRC recommendations through the London Diversity and Race Relations Committee. This committee provides leadership on matters related to diversity, inclusivity, equity, and the elimination of discrimination in London.
- At a City of London council meeting, a Two Row Wampum Belt was unveiled. The belt is a replica of “the grandfather of all treaties” and was given as a gift from the Chippewas of the

Thames First Nation in the presence of the Oneida Nation of the Thames. It is on display in the Mayor's office to serve as a reminder to all of the deep and abiding friendship and of the mutual duty to respect the lasting principles of the pledge made long ago.

3. The City of Ottawa

- The City of Ottawa's council established an Aboriginal Working Committee in 2007 – composed of representatives from the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition, the City of Ottawa, United Way Ottawa, the Ottawa Police Service, and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board – to provide recommendations to council and identify inter-governmental partnerships. The City is currently working with local Indigenous partners to review the TRC's recommendations and determine next steps for approval by city council.
- Ottawa's Police Service partners with several community groups including Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health and the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre to run a Soccer Mentorship Program, an initiative of the City's Aboriginal Working Committee.

4. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

- Toronto and Vancouver, among others, have adopted the UNDRIP as part of the cities' commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.
- UNDRIP is an international instrument adopted by the United Nations on September 13, 2007, to enshrine (according to Article 43) the rights that "constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world". The UNDRIP protects collective rights that may not be addressed in other human rights charters that emphasize individual rights, and it also safeguards the individual rights of Indigenous people. The Declaration is the product of almost 25 years of deliberation by U.N. member states and Indigenous groups. Toronto and Vancouver city councils have endorsed UNDRIP.
- The City of Toronto adopted the UNDRIP as part of the City's year-long proclamation on Truth and Reconciliation 2013-2014. The City of Toronto in its 2003 Vision Statement on Access, Equity and Diversity acknowledged the unique status and cultural diversity of the Aboriginal communities and their right to self-determination. This aligns with Article 3 of the UNDRIP which calls for Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination. Article 11 of the UNDRIP states that Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. In the work of Heritage Preservation and other City divisions that complete environmental assessments, the City of Toronto acknowledges this right by consulting with Aboriginal peoples.

5. Records and Archives

- Toronto has asked the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Division of the City Manager's Office, in consultation with the City Clerk, to identify records held at the city's Archives and City Divisions that are related to the history and legacy of the residential school system and that could be forwarded to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

6. September 30th National Orange Shirt Day

- The Federal government has officially declared September 30th National Orange Shirt Day, a national day to honour residential school survivors, their families, and their communities so that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital

component of the reconciliation process. AMO has committed to recognizing this national day and could encourage its members to do the same.

7. Sioux Lookout

- Sioux Lookout formed a Mayor's Committee on the Truth and Reconciliation Committee and has reported a significant number of activities in their report on the action of the Mayor's Committee. Activities include attending meetings of the Chiefs of Ontario, Assembly of First Nations, and NAN Chiefs; advocacy for alternative justice and a community justice centre; relationship building through a Friendship Accord; First Nations Community Economic Development Hub; Urban Indigenous Action Plan; Municipal-First Nations Working Groups; and the creation of a Police Services Board with an Indigenous Chairperson, among many others.
- A report from the Committee in 2017 made recommendations on a number of Calls to Action, including Education (Recommendation #8, #11); Health (#23); Justice (#31, #41); Royal Proclamation and Covenant (#47); Public Servants (#57); Missing Children and Burial Information (#75); National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (#77); Sports (#87, #88).

Background

Recent Discoveries at Former Residential Schools

In May and June 2021, more than 1 500 graves have been uncovered in Kamloops, British Columbia; Brandon, Manitoba; Marieval, Saskatchewan; and Cranbrook, British Columbia. Investigations are planned or underway at multiple other sites, and there are calls across the country to investigate the grounds of all former residential schools.

There are 18 former residential school locations in Ontario. According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, at least 426 children died while attending these schools, and an unknown number of children are still missing. The TRC has identified 12 unmarked burial sites in Ontario but there are likely more.

As Special Programming added to AMO August Conference, AMO, in partnership with the [Woodland Cultural Centre](#), are presenting a special screening of a virtual tour of the Mohawk Institute Residential School as part of the AMO 2021 Conference program.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada was constituted and created by the Indian Residential Schools Settlement agreement, and the Commission spent six years travelling across the country to hear the stories of survivors and their families.

As summarized in the opening Executive Summary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report, "Canada's residential school system for Aboriginal children was an education system in name only... These residential schools were created for the purpose of separating Aboriginal children from their families, in order to minimize and weaken family ties and cultural linkages, and to indoctrinate children into a new culture – the culture of the legally dominant Euro-Christian Canadian society".

What municipal leaders/councils can do to better support and engage their indigenous residents and neighbours at this time

A question we have been hearing from members is how municipal governments leaders and staff can be more supportive and be part of the healing, learning, and restoration needed to support reconciliation with our Indigenous friends, neighbours, and communities. Municipal leaders are being looked to in order to set the tone and be part of the constructive societal change that is needed and expected.

To set the context, municipal governments are not [part of] the Crown under the Canadian Constitution, the Federal and Provincial governments are. As such, municipal governments are not able to address outstanding rights and claim issues, but we are able to be better neighbours and partners with our Indigenous friends and communities.

1. **Start by listening.** Actively listen to the many Indigenous leaders, elders, and speakers who are sharing their perspectives, advice, and wisdom at this time. Listen locally if you can to your Indigenous neighbours and at Friendship Centres. Although there are common elements, each survivor and each community has a unique story to share. Learn from what is shared voluntarily but don't ask your Indigenous colleagues or friends to educate you.
2. **Educate yourself** about residential schools through the many stories of survivors. May wish to virtually visit the [Woodland Cultural Centre](#) which was formerly the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School, one of the few remaining residential schools in Canada. Be compassionate and self-reflective as survivors and their communities grieve with the recent discoveries of several unmarked children's burials – with likely more discoveries to come.

Educate yourself on the broader area of Indigenous history and perspectives including Indigenous rights under the Canadian [Constitution Act, 1982](#) and [treaties](#) as a start. More informational links can be found at the end of this document.

3. **Speak up thoughtfully.** Consider what your and your council's informed contribution will be to the public discussion in support of Indigenous peoples. Although there is a growing frustration with both silence and platitudes, a sincere and heartfelt statement may take some time to develop which should be accompanied with a follow through implementation strategy. Be particularly careful about the use of social media as it is often not the best forum for thoughtful discussion.
4. **Call for action.** As stated above, municipal governments can't solve issues related to rights and claims. However, they can add their strong voices in support of a call for action to the federal government.

Draft for Discussion

In particular, they can support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) call to action on residential schools, including the need to fund this essential work. The TRC's recommendations 71-76 ask the federal government to accurately detail the number of children who died, establish a National Residential School Student Death Register, and to locate the bodies of children who died so that they can be respectfully memorialized.

As well, there needs to be a requirement that there is a release all of documents and records related to residential schools in Canada including the names of all missing children – be they federal, provincial and/or church records.

5. **Create a Declaration of Mutual Commitment and Friendship** with your local Friendship Centre. During AMO's 2020 Virtual Conference, the [*Declaration of Mutual Commitment and Friendship*](#) was signed by the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres and AMO.

Developed and led by the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) and AMO's memberships, the Declaration highlights the relationships and work being done to improve the quality of life of Indigenous people across Ontario's municipalities. The Declaration emphasizes the leadership of collaborating Friendship Centres and municipal governments and raises the bar for increased future dialogue and partnership. The agreement is designed to help municipal governments and Friendship Centres build relationships in order to improve supports and services for Indigenous people in their communities.

Throughout Ontario, 85 per cent of Indigenous people live in urban and rural municipalities. The OFIFC represents the collective interests of 29 Friendship Centres in cities and towns across the province – places for community members and Indigenous people living in urban spaces to gather, connect with one another, and receive culturally-based services. The centres support and encourage equal access to, and participation in, Canadian society while respecting Indigenous cultural distinctiveness, and have existed in Ontario communities for more than half a century ([*Declaration of Mutual Commitment and Friendship*](#)).

6. **Create urban Indigenous-municipal advisory committee** (if one doesn't already exist) where there is no Friendship Centre in the municipality. This advisory committee could work collaboratively with municipal service providers and staff with respect to municipal services and programs related to the social determinants of health (e.g., housing, child care, senior services, public health) to make sure that they are being planned, delivered, resourced, and evaluated in a way that serves the urban Indigenous community appropriately and in partnership.

This may also be, or evolve into, a forum for Indigenous and municipal service providers to work together in human and social services areas where program integration and cooperation would benefit all peoples receiving such services in the municipality.

7. **Create or renew Relationship Agreements** between a municipal government and neighbouring First Nation(s) and/or indigenous communities. Many municipal governments have formal or informal inter-government agreements with neighbouring First Nation(s)

and/or Indigenous communities covering how they will work together on areas of mutual interest such as economic recovery, tourism, land use planning, and environmental issues. These are different from service agreements on items such as fire protection services, animal services, solid waste, or water/sewer provision. They are the agreements that provide a framework for how all parties will work together on local issues and how dispute resolution can occur if needed.

AMO staff is looking into developing a template framework that includes the key elements in relationship agreements later in 2021 so that it can be available to assist members, First Nations, and Indigenous communities in local discussions about their own Relationship Agreements.

8. **Support your Indigenous colleagues and staff.** It is not a usual time. Know that Indigenous colleagues and staff may need time for themselves, their families, and their communities. If possible, employers should try to make sure that employees have access to culturally appropriate employee support programs or counselling.
9. **Attend memorial events or ceremonies** where non-Indigenous people are invited. Wear orange to demonstrate support for survivors and their families. The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, also known as Orange Shirt Day, on September 30th is now a federal statutory holiday.

Municipal governments are encouraged to fly the “Every Child Matters” orange flag for the month of September leading up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.