

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

**TO:** *MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION EVENT –  
FUNDING CONTRIBUTION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** a funding contribution of \$3,000 be approved for distribution to the Spirit of the Children Society in support of the Society's annual National Day of Truth and Reconciliation Event; and,

**THAT** similar contributions for future fiscal years be included in the City's annual budget process for Indigenous Relations.

**REPORT**

The Executive Committee of Council, at its Open meeting held on July 5, 2023, received and adopted the attached report seeking Council approval for a funding contribution for the annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation event organized by the Spirit of the Children Society, and the inclusion of similar contributions for future fiscal years in the City's annual budget process for Indigenous Relations.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of Council,

Councillor S. Dhaliwal  
Chair

Councillor R. Lee  
Vice Chair

**TO:** EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (ECC)

**FROM:** DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

**SUBJECT:** NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION EVENT – FUNDING CONTRIBUTION

**PURPOSE:** To seek Committee and Council approval of a funding contribution for the annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation event organized by the Spirit of the Children Society.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT** a funding contribution of \$3,000 be approved for distribution to the Spirit of the Children Society in support of the Society's annual National Day of Truth and Reconciliation Event.

**THAT** similar contributions for future fiscal years be included in the City's annual budget process for Indigenous Relations.

## 1.0 POLICY SECTION

A City of Burnaby financial contribution for a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Event is supported by:

- Burnaby City Council adoption in 2016 of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 'Calls to Action', as pertaining to local government;
- Burnaby City Council recognition of unceded territory in 2019, and the subsequent opening of government-to-government relations with local Indigenous Nations<sup>1</sup>;
- The City's Equity Policy, initially adopted in 1994, and updated in 2020 and 2023; and
- The Burnaby Strategic Plan and the Core Values of community, integrity and respect.

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<sup>1</sup> The Host Nations are the xʷməθkʷəy̍əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), səliwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh), and kwikwəłəm (Kwkwetlem) Nations.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation occurs on September 30 each year and honours the children who never returned home and the Survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities.

Residential schools for Indigenous children existed in Canada from the 17th century until the late 1990s. It is estimated that at least 150,000 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children attended residential schools during this period. These schools were largely operated by certain churches and religious organizations. They were administered and funded by the federal government as a key aspect of colonialism.

The system was imposed on Indigenous peoples as part of a broad set of assimilation efforts to destroy their rich cultures and identities; and, to suppress their histories. Public commemoration via a national day of the tragic and painful history, and ongoing impacts of residential schools, is an important component of the truth and reconciliation process.

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was recognized as a federal statutory holiday in 2021, and in March 2023 the Province of B.C. adopted the day as a broadly observed statutory holiday.

## **3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION**

As part of staff's efforts to implement the 'Calls to Action' contained within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report, as directed by Council, working relationships have been established with the Spirit of the Children Society (SOTCS). The SOTCS is an Indigenous-led non-profit organization that offers early childhood, family, cultural, and housing support programming in New Westminster, Burnaby, and the Tri-Cities. As one of the only Indigenous-led non-profits offering programming focused towards Burnaby Indigenous community members, this is, and has been, an important relationship to nurture and expand.

Since 2021, the City of Burnaby has provided informal support to the annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Event organized by the SOTCS. The form of this event varies, but in 2022, it was organized as a memorial pipe ceremony, to which Mayor was invited as a witness, and to which Council and senior City staff (Indigenous Relations Director) were also invited. This support coincides with official City recognition of the day, which pre-dated the Provincial recognition noted above in Section 2.0.

As the City moves forward with implementing the 'Calls to Action' and fostering government-to-government relationships with the Host Nations, staff are recommending that a financial contribution towards the SOTCS' annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Event be formalized as an ongoing commitment.

## **4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Not applicable.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Staff are recommending that financial support for 2023 be set at \$3,000. This request will be drawn from the ECC grants budget that has been provisioned through the 2023 Annual Budget and is funded through the gaming interest reserve.

Respectfully submitted,

Mikelle Sasakamoose, Acting Director Indigenous Relations

For

Noreen Kassam, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Financial Officer

## **REPORT CONTRIBUTORS**

This report was prepared by Rebekah Mahaffey, Executive Director Civic Innovation Lab and reviewed by Erika Balabanoff, Policy and Administrative Coordinator Office of the CAO.