



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** October 28, 2024
From: Jason Kita **File:** 01-0005-01/2024-Vol
 Director, Intergovernmental Relations and 01
 Corporate and Strategic Planning
Re: **Indigenous Relations Strategy – Proposed Guiding Principles and Focus Areas**

Staff Recommendations

1. That the Indigenous Relations Strategy proposed Guiding Principles and Focus Areas outlined in the staff report titled “Indigenous Relations Strategy – Proposed Guiding Principles and Focus Areas,” dated October 28, 2024, from the Director, Intergovernmental Relations and Corporate and Strategic Planning, be endorsed; and
2. That staff be directed to develop an Indigenous Relations Strategy and engage with Indigenous communities to seek collaboration into the development of the Strategy.

Jason Kita
 Director, Intergovernmental Relations and Corporate and Strategic Planning
 (604-276-4091)

Att: 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	
Law	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

At the Regular Council Meeting on May 8, 2023, City Council approved:

That the report “Truth and Reconciliation Update”, dated April 11, 2023, from the Director, Intergovernmental Relations and Corporate and Strategic Planning, be endorsed.

The purpose of this report is to present Council with eight proposed Guiding Principles and four Focus Areas being recommended for the Indigenous Relations Strategy.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #1 Proactive in Stakeholder and Civic Engagement:

Proactive stakeholder and civic engagement to foster understanding and involvement and advance Richmond’s interests.

1.1 Continue fostering effective and strategic relationships with other levels of government and Indigenous communities;

1.2 Advocate for the needs of Richmond in collaboration with partners and stakeholders; and

1.3 Increase the reach of communication and engagement efforts to connect with Richmond’s diverse community.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources;

6.1 Advance a variety of programs, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community; and

6.3 Foster intercultural harmony, community belonging, and social connections.

Background

The City of Richmond understands that reconciliation is essential to creating a welcoming community while developing connections with the local Indigenous Peoples. The Indigenous Relations Strategy will guide the City’s path to reconciliation through the actions and initiatives developed within the plan. Indigenous issues will be addressed by the Manager, Indigenous Relations and this position will work towards achieving the recommended actions supported by Council.

Analysis

The Manager, Indigenous Relations was hired in January 2024. A key responsibility for this position is to create an Indigenous Relations Strategy and corresponding action plan for the City which will guide the organization to support work related to Truth and Reconciliation.

The Strategy will focus on relationships, education and implementing a city-wide approach to reconciliation. The process of reconciliation requires a long-term commitment to renew or develop relationship with Indigenous Peoples based on the recognition of rights, respect, and cooperation.

Engagement with the City's closest Indigenous neighbouring community, the Musqueam Indian Band, will be prioritized in the development of the strategy along with other Indigenous communities where alignment of interests exist. It will be important to understand, through our engagement process, the interests of each community and their contribution to the Strategy.

Objectives

The objectives of the strategy are:

- Prioritize Indigenous knowledge to foster an environment of trust, inclusion, and confidence.
- Foster relationships built upon honest and open communication.
- Accountability for personal and professional development on the path to reconciliation.
- Provide a foundation for a shared vision that respects individual values, beliefs, and collective knowledge.

Proposed Guiding Principles

The City's Indigenous Relations Strategy will require thoughtful consideration of cultural, historical, and social contexts. The following proposed Guiding Principles are meant to guide the City's initial efforts in moving forward with strategy development and may change as Indigenous and community engagement occurs. The Principles are reflective of the reconciliation framework rooted from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission being adopted nationally by provincial authorities and local governments and will help ensure that Richmond's strategy is respectful, effective, and collaborative.

1. **Respecting diversity and the unique interests** - recognize and respect the unique cultural practices, traditions, and values of Indigenous peoples. Understand the historical context of Indigenous communities, including the impacts of colonization.
2. **Inclusion and participation of Indigenous Peoples** – engage Indigenous communities and utilize their insights and perspectives to address the desires and needs of the communities they live in.
3. **Partnerships, collaborations and capacity building** – facilitate relationships between the City, Indigenous Peoples, communities and organizations supporting opportunities for advancement.

4. **Promote and facilitate cultural inclusion** – promote and protect the cultural heritage and practices of Indigenous Peoples and communities and support education initiatives.
5. **Complement City strategies** – maintain ongoing and open communication so that Indigenous planning processes align and support the City’s overall objectives and priorities.
6. **Provide measurable outcomes** – continually measure and monitor the effectiveness, value and quality of the outcomes and ensure they support the priorities and focus areas of the Council Strategic Plan.
7. **Promote a learning environment** – promote city-wide Indigenous awareness, education and training in a safe and inclusive environment.
8. **Build integrity and trust** – uphold integrity and trust as critical building blocks for strong relationships and effective engagement through open, honest, and transparent communication.

Proposed Focus Areas

The purpose of the focus areas is to provide a clear set of high level outcomes for the Indigenous Relations Strategy. Action items will be developed for each of the four focus areas.

Proposed Focus Areas include:

1. **Government to Government Relationships** – the process of reconciliation requires a long term commitment to address the harms caused by systemic racism, and most importantly, to renew and develop relationships with Indigenous Peoples based on recognition of rights, respect and cooperation.
2. **Coordination and Prioritization of Reconciliation Efforts** – City departments are diverse and unique in their operations. Topics to be targeted in each department will include: engagement, education, cultural awareness, networking, relationship building, and Indigenous inclusion.
3. **Taking Action in Our Community** – The City of Richmond’s goal of recognizing and respecting diversity is embedded in the process of reconciliation. Through an Indigenous Relations webpage, programming, activities, and Commemorative Events, the community will be supporting the City’s commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
4. **Organizational Cultural Competency** – Education and training is an important focus for the organization to inform City staff on the core Indigenous issues and history and improve relationship building with Indigenous organizations and communities.

Next Steps

Subject to Council’s approval, the Guiding Principles and Focus Areas will provide guidance towards the development of a framework for the Indigenous Relations Strategy. An outline of the Strategy Development Stages is included in **Attachment 1**. Staff will immediately focus on Stages 1 to 5 with an anticipated completion timeline of Stage 6 by the end of 2025. Staff will have a better indication of the full Strategy Development timeline after the completion of Stage 6.

Regular updates to Council will be provided including gathering feedback from Council on the Draft Strategy Framework, Revised Strategy Framework, and Draft Indigenous Relations Strategy. In addition to gathering feedback from Council, engagement with various Council Advisory Committees may occur.

Since the final strategy may take some time to develop, key Indigenous initiatives will continue to take place throughout the year.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The Indigenous Relations Strategy will demonstrate the City's commitment to building relationships with Indigenous Nations, Peoples and communities. It will provide a framework for setting priorities and allocating resources. The Guiding Principles and Focus Areas will be fundamental in the development of the Strategy and will demonstrate the City's leadership in advancing social equity and reconciliation.

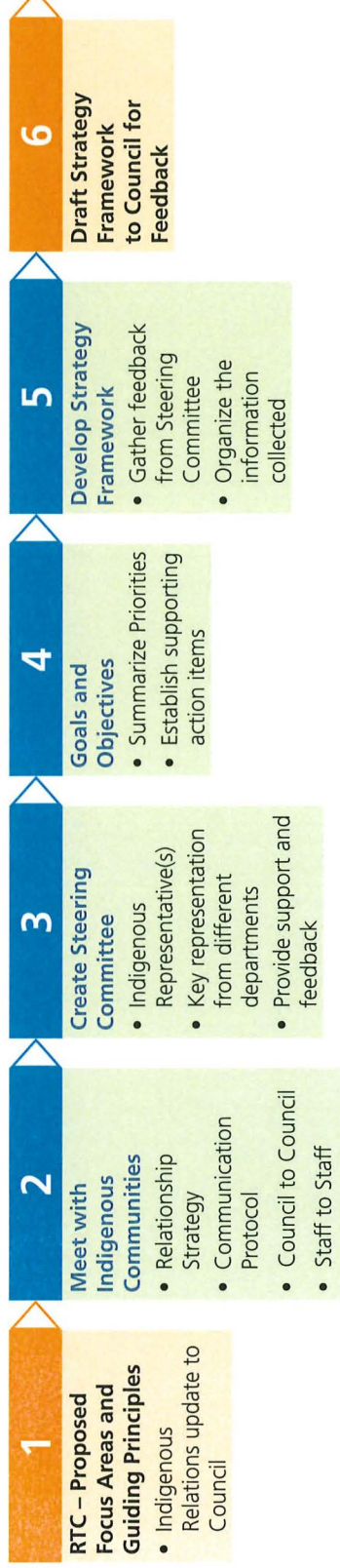


Colin Pennier
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(604-276-4349)

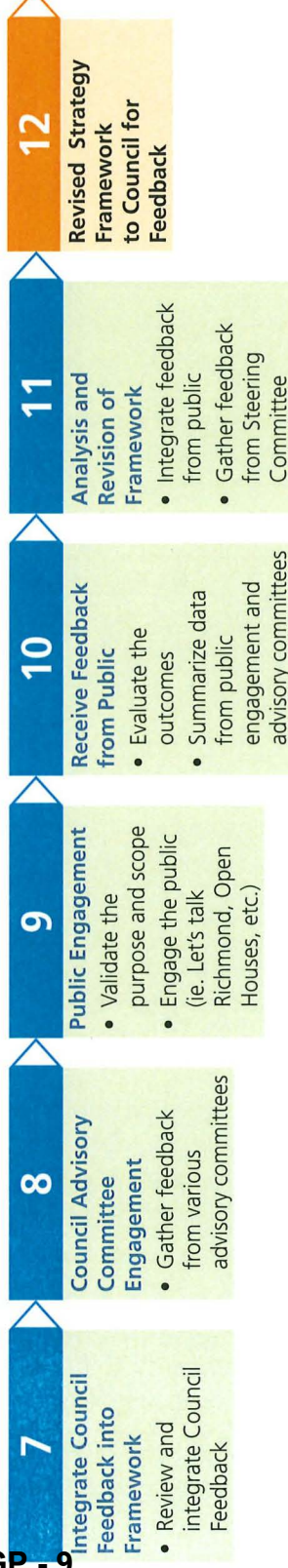
Att: 1 Proposed Strategy Development Stages

Proposed Strategy Development Stages

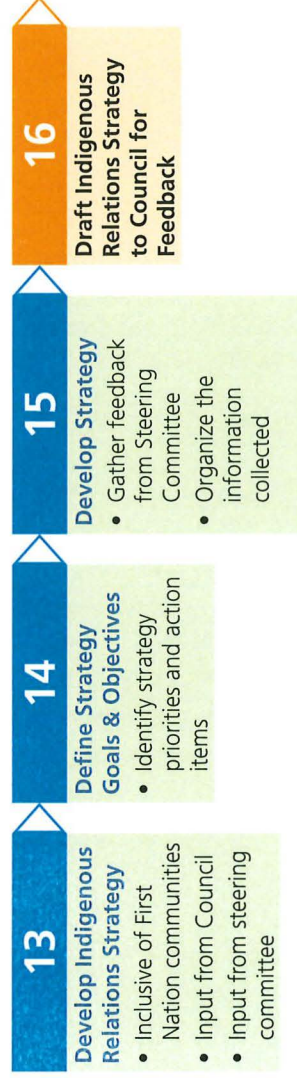
Framework Development



Community Engagement



Strategy Development

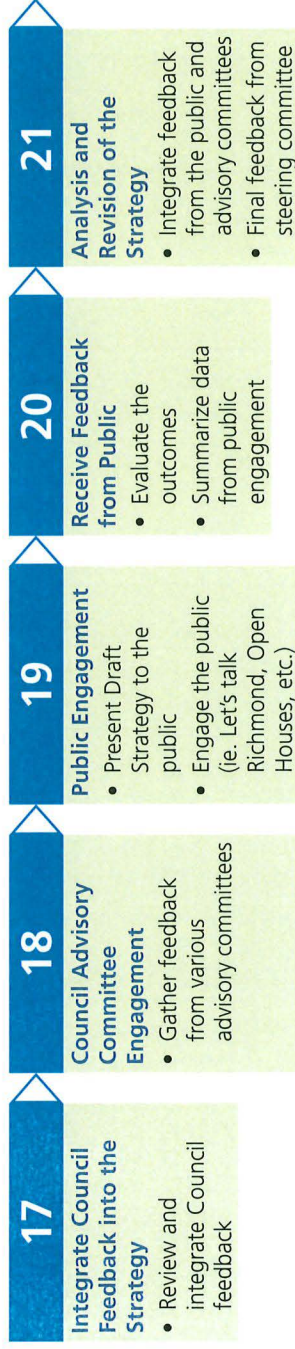


*Strategy development stages may be revised through the process. Staff will provide regular updates.



Proposed Strategy Development Stages continued . . .

Community Engagement



Strategy Approval and Implementation



*Strategy development stages may be revised through the process. Staff will provide regular updates.