

# Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two Spirit Report

## ISSUE

What is the City of Saskatoon's (City) response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA (MMIWG2S) Calls for Justice Report?

## BACKGROUND

On June 3, 2019, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA (MMIWG2S) Calls for Justice Report was released. The National Inquiry's Final Report revealed that persistent and deliberate human and Indigenous rights violations and abuses are the root cause behind Canada's high rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgendered, Queer, Questioning, Intersexed, A-sexual (2SLGBTQQIA) people.

It includes 231 individual Calls for Justice directed at governments, institutions, social service providers, industries and all Canadians.

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on July 29, 2019 resolved that the Administration review the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and identify options for how the City of Saskatoon can respond to the Report's Calls for Justice that are within the City's jurisdiction, in a fashion similar to the existing review that has been undertaken for the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Governance and Priorities Committee received an Information Report in response to the above at its meeting held on September 21, 2020.

## CURRENT STATUS

In November 2020, the City created an MMIWG2S Advisory Group (Advisory Group) comprised of an Elder and a number of organizations: Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan; Iskwewuk Ewichiwitochik (Women Walking Together); Les Filles de Madelaine/CUMFI; OUTSaskatoon; Saskatoon Public Schools; Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools; Saskatoon Tribal Council; Saskatchewan Health Authority; Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Saskatchewan Inc.; Saskatoon Police Service; Saskatoon Public Library; Saskatoon Fire Department; and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The purpose of the Advisory Group was to assist in the selection of a consultant; share information and collaborate; and provide guidance and advice in the development of the report.

On December 11, 2020, the City issued a call for proposals seeking a firm or consultant to develop a report and recommendations that would inform a long-term strategy and

action plan on how to improve the quality of life and health and safety for Indigenous women and girls and Two Spirit people experiencing all forms of violence, trauma and/or exploitation.

On February 11, 2021, the contract was awarded to Hope Restored Canada, a Saskatoon-based non-profit organization that assists individuals exiting human trafficking. Hope Restored Canada has brought in a number of individuals with expertise to form their consultant team.

Members of the consultant team include:

- Gwen Dueck, Independent Consultant and Board Chair Hope Restored Canada, Project Team Lead
- Marilyn Poitras, Project Team Lead
- Dr. Sharon Acoose, Project Advisor
- Dr. Priscilla Settee, Project Advisor
- Dr. Manuela Valle-Castro, Researcher
- Jenny Gardipy, Ph.D Candidate, Researcher
- Natalie Rzeszutek, Researcher
- Breen Ouellette, Researcher
- Heather McPherson, Practicum Student, Hope Restored Canada
- Joeline Magill, Executive Director Hope Restored Canada

Hope Restored Canada has submitted its Final Report (Final Report) which is attached as Appendix 1.

### **DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS**

The Final Report proposes what the City can do to support IWG2S. It does not replicate the extensive work already done on this issue, including the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA Calls for Justice Report. Rather, the process is complementary, meant to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and Two Spirit people and their families, expand the diversity of input by including others into the discussion such as community and business leaders, and provide innovative solutions.

The project team privileged the voices of the individuals and families with lived experience, advocates, and friends of families of those who are living within the structures of violence, oppression, misogyny, and supremacy. By engaging with a variety of individuals and organizations, the project was framed as an opportunity for collaboration and co-creation of programs, structures and systems that will provide safety and security not only for Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people, but all citizens of Saskatoon.

The report outlines ideas and makes recommendations for the City to institute actions that will embrace IWG2S as full partners and citizens in Saskatoon. Of significance is

the need to engage IWG2S as decision makers, highlighting that partnerships and relationships are key to moving forward and facilitating change.

The Final Report, in its sole recommendation of “Listen to the Aunties”, speaks to the importance of “The Aunties”, the matriarchs in Indigenous community. It is clear from the Final Report that there is an expectation that the City act as leaders of safety, security, and trust for IWG2S and that bold action be taken.

Past approaches have not achieved the impact that has been hoped for. As a result, the Final Report uses narratives and stories that aim to advance bolder policy solutions to enable institutional change and create a paradigm shift in approach.

In that context, the Final Report breaks down the bold recommendation into 3 phases:

- Phase 1: Laying the Groundwork and Hiring the Independent Representative of Matriarchs for IWG2S.
- Phase 2: Creation of an IWG2S Centre to coordinate services that works in tandem with the rest of the City departments and the other agencies offering services to IWG2S.
- Phase 3: Extending the Role of the Representative of Matriarchs to become an Officer of Transparency and Accountability.

Administration will be conducting an analysis of the recommendation and actions to explore ways in which the City can implement them including working with the federal and provincial governments to pursue meaningful reform to the status quo - this work will align with the Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Stewardship Committee’s plan to create a coordinated approach and holistic strategy to advance these issues.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications by receiving this information report. However, there may be some resources required for communications and engagement this fiscal year.

Based on an initial review, Administration will bring forward options for operational and capital funding in the 2022-23 Business Plan and Budget to implement the recommendation and actions in the Final Report.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no privacy, legal, social or environmental implications identified.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- Debrief with the MMIWG2S Advisory Group and Hope Restored Canada;
- Administration will conduct an analysis of the Final Report submitted by Hope Restored Canada;

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- A communications, public education, and engagement plan will be developed; and
- Capital and Operational funding to implement the recommendation and actions will be brought forward for consideration in the 2022–2023 budget.

### APPENDIX

1. “IWG2S: Coming Home” Final Report Prepared for the City of Saskatoon For a Response to Implement the MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA Calls for Justice

#### Report Approval

Written by: Melissa Cote, Director of Indigenous Initiatives  
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Approved by: Jeff Jorgenson, City Manager

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