

Joint Coordinating Committee on Indigenous Rights Terms of Reference

Approved by the First Voice Partnership Table on February 21, 2024
Adopted unanimously by St. John's City Council (10-0) on March 19, 2024

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Joint Coordinating Committee on Indigenous Rights (the “Committee”) is to develop recommendations for implementing the City of St. John's commitments as outlined in Council's 2020 *Declaration in Support of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, appended here as Schedule A, and as reaffirmed in First Voice Call for Change 29, appended here as Schedule B. Further related commitments include continuing to work alongside the City's partners in First Voice to advance the urban Indigenous coalition's 2023 Community Action Plan, and in particular by implementing the Calls for Change that fall within the City's jurisdiction, appended here as Schedule C.

2. MANDATE

The Committee is constituted by and is directly and jointly accountable, via its Co-Chairs, to St. John's City Council and to the First Voice Partnership Table.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The Committee is led by the following Co-Chairs:

- The City of St. John's, as represented by Kevin Breen, City Manager; and
- First Light St. John's Friendship Centre, as represented by Justin Campbell, Director of Advocacy.

Additional members of staff for the City of St. John's include:

- Ann-Marie Cashin, Planner III;
- Cheryl Mullett, City Solicitor;
- Jessica Foley, Manager, Parks & Open Spaces; and
- Krista Gladney, Manager, Healthy City & Inclusion.

Joint Coordinating Committee on Indigenous Rights

Terms of Reference

Additional members of staff for First Light include:

- Chad Bedard, Research Coordinator;
- Jordan Lawrence, Action Circle Coordinator;
- Megan Pottle, Coordinator of Housing & Inclusion; and
- Melissa Samms, Arts Administrator.

The Co-Chairs may further appoint up to two First Voice Community Advocates to join the Committee on a voluntary basis. These members currently include:

- Corey Morris; and
- Natasha Drover.

4. ACTIVITIES & SCOPE OF WORK

At the direction of the Co-Chairs and in pursuit of its Purpose, the Committee shall be responsible for the following functions:

- (a) Reviewing relevant City processes, procedures, policies, and bylaws;
- (b) Developing initiatives to make the City of St. John's more fully inclusive of urban Indigenous Peoples;
- (c) Coordinating, conducting, and supporting evidence-based research;
- (d) Identifying funding opportunities and securing resources;
- (e) Leading positive systemic change; and
- (f) Making recommendations to St. John's City Council as required.

5. DECISION-MAKING

All decisions related of the Committee shall be made by consensus among its members. In these Terms of Reference, "consensus" means that everyone involved in making the decision:

- Feels they have been heard;
- Understands the reasons for the decision and the need to take action; and
- Can support the final outcome, even if they personally hold an opposing view.

6. MEETING FREQUENCY

The Committee shall meet at least once every 3 months. More frequent meetings may be called at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.

Joint Coordinating Committee on Indigenous Rights

Terms of Reference

7. ADMINISTRATION

Acting through their Co-Chairs, the City of St. John's and First Light are jointly responsible for ensuring that the Committee has access to the necessary administrative support to carry out its work an efficient manner. This includes:

- Coordinating and facilitating all meetings, such as compiling and circulating agendas, minutes, and other meeting papers in a timely manner;
- Facilitating information-sharing between and among members and other stakeholders as appropriate, including drafting and disseminating reports; and
- Providing regular updates on the Committee's progress to St. John's City Council and the First Voice Partnership Table.

8. AMENDMENTS

These Terms of Reference may be amended in writing at any time, subject to the approval of the Co-Chairs, the First Voice Partnership Table, and St. John's City Council.

SCHEDULE A:
DECLARATION IN SUPPORT OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES¹

Adopted unanimously (9-0) by St. John's City Council on September 21, 2020.

In order to promote and strengthen mutually respectful relationships with the urban Indigenous community in St. John's and with all other First Peoples in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, the City of St. John's hereby recognizes that:

- The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, of which the City of St. John's is the capital, exists on the ancestral homelands of the Inuit, the Innu, the Mi'kmaq, and the Beothuk;
- The culture of the Beothuk has been lost forever and can never be recovered;
- Indigenous Peoples continue to endure many hardships and injustices that began with first contact and that have created significant social, economic, and health disparities;
- Indigenous Peoples were excluded from the Terms of Union when Newfoundland and Labrador joined Canada in 1949, which limited access to programs and services that otherwise would have been available to them;
- Indigenous Peoples have distinct and diverse histories, cultures, and identities;
- Self-determination is an inherent right of all Indigenous Peoples; and
- St. John's has the fastest growing urban Indigenous population in Canada.

Acting therefore in support of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, the City of St. John's hereby declares its commitment to:

- Support and promote the implementation of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP);
- Work to decolonize the City by making indigenization and anti-racism priorities with respect to its governance, municipal services, and infrastructure;

¹ Available online at <https://www.stjohns.ca/en/city-hall/declaration-in-support-of-the-rights-of-indigenous-people.aspx>.

Joint Coordinating Committee on Indigenous Rights

Terms of Reference

- Recognize and celebrate the many contributions that Indigenous Peoples have made and continue to make to our City, province, and country;
- Maintain membership in First Voice while continuing to build equal partnerships with Indigenous organizations in the City;
- Collaborate with the urban Indigenous community to develop, promote, and implement a shared Community Action Plan and to report annually to Council on progress toward achieving its objectives; and
- Work with all levels of government, including the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Canada, to recognize, support, and advance the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**Joint Coordinating Committee on Indigenous Rights
Terms of Reference**

**SCHEDULE B:
FIRST VOICE CALL FOR CHANGE 29**

Ensure the full implementation of the City of St. John's commitments under Council's 2020 *Declaration in Support of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.²

² First Voice, *Our Shared Vision: A Path toward Truth and Reconciliation in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023-33; an Urban Indigenous Community Action Plan* (February 2023), ISBN 978-1-7387971-1-0, p. 27.

SCHEDULE C:
MUNICIPAL- LEVEL FIRST VOICE CALLS FOR CHANGE³

In addition to supporting the City of St. John's in fulfilling its commitments under Council's 2020 *Declaration in Support of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, First Voice in its 2023 Community Action Plan identified the following Calls for Change as falling partly or exclusively within the jurisdiction of the City of St. John's:

- **Call for Change 6.** Build strategic partnerships to support the development and delivery of sector-specific anti-racism training in essential areas such as health, law, education, engineering, and government services.
- **Call for Change 11.** Lead, support, and coordinate research on the demographics of homelessness in St. John's.
- **Call for Change 12.** Ensure that demographic data drives program evaluation and delivery of services to the homeless population in St. John's.
- **Call for Change 13.** Collaborate with service delivery agencies to ensure that Indigenous residents in nonmarket housing have access to culturally appropriate programming and spaces.
- **Call for Change 16.** Support provincial and national efforts to implement a universal basic income.
- **Call for Change 17.** Support efforts to ensure that Indigenous people and members of other racialized and marginalized communities have access to safe, affordable, and reliable transportation throughout the city.
- **Call for Change 18.** Promote and support efforts to improve access to safe, stable, nutritious, and affordable food sources for the urban Indigenous community. This includes wild game, country foods, and other culturally significant sources of nutrition.
- **Call for Change 19.** Decolonize the City of St. John's municipal plan and all related processes, procedures, and policies, including the heritage bylaw.

³ See Appendix C in First Voice, *Our Shared Vision: A Path toward Truth and Reconciliation in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023-33; an Urban Indigenous Community Action Plan* (February 2023), ISBN 978-1-7387971-1-0, pp. 35-39.

Joint Coordinating Committee on Indigenous Rights

Terms of Reference

- **Call for Change 20.** Work with all levels of government to ensure that National Indigenous Peoples' Day is recognized as an official and statutory holiday.
- **Call for Change 21.** Work with the City of St. John's to Indigenize place names.
- **Call for Change 23.** Promote and support formal Indigenous stewardship of public green spaces in the City of St. John's, such as parks and gardens.
- **Call for Change 24.** Establish a highly visible monument in the City of St. John's to honour the survivors of residential schools and those who never made it home to their families.
- **Call for Change 27.** Promote and support the establishment of full-time, paid Indigenous advisory positions in essential areas such as health, law, education, engineering, and government services.
- **Call for Change 30.** Ensure that municipal and provincial policymaking is shaped and informed by appropriate demographic data.
- **Call for Change 31.** Promote and support urban Indigenous participation on critical governance and advisory boards.
- **Call for Change 34.** Promote and support the full participation of Indigenous businesses, including social enterprises, in government procurement processes at both the municipal and provincial levels.
- **Call for Change 40.** Advocate for the adoption and full implementation of UNDRIP at all levels of government.