



Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of July 14 2022

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** July 11 2022
From: Mayor Helps
Subject: Regional Truth and Reconciliation Day Event

BACKGROUND

Each year since 2017 the City of Victoria has been host to Xe Xe Smun' Eem Orange Shirt Day in Centennial Square, an event co-organized with residential school survivors. Funding for Orange Shirt Day is embedded in the City's core budget as part of the protocol budget. This event will be held this year as planned and budgeted.

Last year, 2021, marked the first day that September 30th was a National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, as a result of new federal government legislation. On September 30th 2021, there were a number of events held across the region in different municipalities and with different nations, some of which overlapped time wise.

The mayors from across the region reflected on the importance of the new national holiday and our desire to take a more coordinated regional approach. We wrote to the chiefs in the region to share that we wanted to honour and observe The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and we sought guidance from them and their communities on the most respectful, meaningful, and culturally appropriate way to do so. Please see attached letter.

The mayors received a response from the Songhees Nation (see attached) noting that:

"Songhees Nation will be observing the second National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in a meaningful way that will honour the former Indian Residential School students, intergenerational survivors and the memory of those children who died while being forced to attend these institutions. As well, Council sees this day as an opportunity to build on or reset the relationships and protocols with local municipalities, to advance our shared priorities, and to continue to chart a path towards implementation of all 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada."

To achieve these objectives, the Nation is proposing:

- A cultural celebration and Pow Wow to mark September 30th on the South Island
- Securing a venue large enough to hold such a celebration safely and respectfully (as a suggestion one of the athletic fields at the University of Victoria would be ideal)
- Establishing a First Nations/Indigenous coordinating committee chaired by Songhees Nation and made up of representatives from our neighboring Nations

- Financial support and sponsorship from each of the municipalities for costs associated with this event, which has the potential to draw quite a bit of interest from First Nations and Indigenous Peoples, the general public and from all levels of government.

The organizing committee has explored a number of potential venues and has selected Royal Athletic Park (RAP) in Victoria as the most suitable and desirable regional venue which is available for use on September 30th.

The recommendations here will secure RAP for the use of the regional event, request the mayor to seek funding from regional municipalities, and forward this recommendation to the July 14th 2022 daytime Council meeting. Forwarding to the daytime Council meeting is important so that RAP can be secured for September 30th, event planning can get underway, and the mayor and Songhees can seek financial contributions from regional municipalities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council approve up to \$50,000 to support a regional event to mark Truth and Reconciliation Day September 30th, including in-kind support and the waiving of fees and for use of the Royal Athletic Park, to be funded through Corporate Contingency in the 2022 Financial Plan.
2. That Council request the mayor to work with regional mayors to contribute funding to this regional event.
3. That this motion be forwarded to the daytime Council meeting of July 14th 2022.

Respectfully submitted,



Mayor Helps