



Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole meeting of June 1, 2023

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** June 1, 2023
From: Mayor Alto
Subject: Support for 2023 Truth and Reconciliation Day Ceremonial Event

BACKGROUND

September 30, 2021, was the first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation recognized by federal government legislation.

On September 30, 2022, Songhees Nation hosted a cultural celebration and Pow Wow to mark that national day. More than 8,000 people from around the region, visiting Nations' members and dignitaries, attended the one day event, which took place at Royal Athletic Park.

On May 17, 2023, Songhees Nation Council advised the City of Victoria that the Nation will once again observe the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in a significant, meaningful way. This major cultural and ceremonial event will honour former Indian Residential School students and intergenerational survivors, in memory of those children who died while at these institutions. Songhees Nation has requested city support for this occasion, and in seeking additional financial contributions from other south island municipalities.

In 2022, Council approved up to \$50,000 in support of that year's event, and Council members and city staff helped organize, and participated in, the 2022 Pow Wow. Council welcomed these opportunities to nurture the city's relationships with local Nations, and help facilitate learning and observation of local protocols, with other municipalities. This opportunity for collaboration continues our journeys on the paths of reconciliation.

This year, the Songhees Nation is proposing to organize and host the 2023 September 30th cultural celebration and Pow Wow at Royal Athletic Park, a venue large enough to hold such a celebration safely and respectfully. It is expected that this event will once again draw substantial interest from Vancouver Island First Nations and visiting Indigenous Peoples, the general public and all orders of government.

To organize the event, the Nation has established an Indigenous coordinating committee, chaired by Songhees Nation and made up of representatives from Songhees and neighboring Nations. Once again, the Nation has honoured the city by inviting city staff to join this committee.

Songhees Nation has again requested financial and organizational assistance from the city, and help in seeking additional financial support and sponsorship from other south island municipalities to help defray costs associated with this ceremony.

The recommendations below would secure Royal Athletic Park for the use of the event, allow a financial contribution from the city of up to \$50,000 plus in-kind contributions, request the mayor to invite contributions from other south island municipalities, and forward this recommendation to the June 1, 2023, daytime Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council approve up to \$50,000 to support an event to mark Truth and Reconciliation Day 2023, including in-kind support and the waiving of fees for use of the Royal Athletic Park on September 30, 2023, to be funded through remaining 2023 contingency funds.
2. That Council request the mayor contact mayors from other south island municipalities to invite other municipal contributions to support this event.
3. That this motion be forwarded to the daytime Council meeting of June 1, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Alto 