

REPORT

Human Resources & Information Technology

To: Mayor Cote and Members of Council **Date:** July 11, 2022

From: Eva Yip, Acting Director, Human Resources & Information Technology **File:**

Item #: 2022-548

Subject: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – September 30, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve a second, one-time declaration to appoint September 30, 2022 as a statutory holiday for the City of New Westminster to commemorate the history and legacy of residential schools and honour Indigenous communities, families and survivors by observing a day for Truth and Reconciliation.

THAT staff report back to Council in 2023 with a recommendation regarding when the City of New Westminster will mark Truth and Reconciliation Day in subsequent years to ensure alignment with the Province of British Columbia.

PURPOSE

To update Council regarding the Province of British Columbia's (the "Province") continuing to actively engage in consultation with Indigenous Peoples, labour, and business stakeholders on determining how best and most-respectfully to observe the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and to propose that Council appoint September 30, 2022 as a statutory holiday in alignment with the Province until a decision is made at the provincial level.

BACKGROUND

On June 3, 2021, the federal government officially adopted the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (the "National Day"), which is to be observed on September 30th. This National Day is now included in the list of statutory holidays in the Canada Labour Code and applies only to federally-regulated employees.

Following the federal government announcement, on August 3, 2021, the Province also marked September 30th as a day of commemoration and announced its intention to consult with Indigenous leaders, organizations, and communities on how best to respectfully commemorate this National Day moving forward.

At the August 30, 2021 Regular meeting, Council approved a one-time declaration to appoint September 30, 2021 as a statutory holiday for the City.

As the Province continues its consultation process, it has advised that provincial public sector employers should follow the same process as last year. That is, that September 30, 2022 should again be observed as a statutory day for remembrance for those employees who are normally entitled to federal and provincial statutory days (See Attachment #1).

ANALYSIS

Since 2021, the federal government has recognized September 30th as a statutory holiday. The Province has also recognized the same and is doing so again for 2022 until consultations on how and when to recognize the day in the future are complete. As such, it is noted that the date of the provincial statutory holiday in the future may not be the same date as declared by the federal government (i.e., September 30th).

The City of New Westminster has collective agreement language similar to that in provincial collective agreements. The City has had without prejudice discussions with the various unions regarding the proposed statutory holiday on September 30, 2022, which would apply across all employee groups. Furthermore, similar to operations during existing statutory holidays, regular programs and services will continue to operate in some departments and facilities on this day.

Given the Province's stance of recommending observance for 2021 and again in 2022 pending their consultation process, staff propose that Council, for a second time, approve a one-time declaration to appoint September 30, 2022 as a statutory holiday in recognition of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and then consider the City's future position at a later date to ensure alignment with the Province. This direction is consistent with the anticipated recommendations that the majority of Metro Vancouver municipalities will be making to their respective Councils.

CONCLUSION

Following endorsement of the declaration for a one-time appointment of September 30, 2022 as a statutory holiday for all employee groups for the City of New Westminster to observe the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, staff will report back to Council and make a recommendation for this National Day in 2023 and beyond, based on the ensuing decision made by the Province.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Province of BC Update on Consultations

OPTIONS

Option 1: THAT Council approve a second one-time declaration to appoint September 30, 2022 as a statutory holiday for the City of New Westminster in recognition of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Option 2: THAT staff report back to Council in 2023 with a recommendation regarding when the Corporation of the City of New Westminster will recognize National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in 2023 and beyond to ensure alignment with the Province of British Columbia.

Option 3: THAT Council provide staff with other direction.

Staff recommend Options 1 and 2

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:

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This report was approved by:

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