

Town of Canmore commitments to Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

“Canada today is struggling with the complexities of understanding its relationship with Indigenous Peoples. As First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people are establishing an ever-growing political and economic presence, it has never been more important for all Canadians to develop a knowledge base to better understand this connection.” *Carl Anne Hilton, CEO of Transformation International*

We are a community that desires well-being for all individuals. We want to reconcile the past and build new relationships for the future.

This document is intended to provide a flexible framework that is a starting point for the Town of Canmore in working to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. It provides some context for Town of Canmore engagements and events already unfolding between Treaty 7 First Nations and Indigenous communities and individuals. It is also intended to support efforts by Town Council and Administration to honour the call to all Canadians to play a meaningful and appropriate role in reconciliation and to work toward right relations by sustaining meaningful and mutually beneficial ways forward with Treaty 7 First Nations and Indigenous communities. The desired outcomes are:

- To guide the municipality in advancing the process of Canadian reconciliation
- Strengthen right relations with the Stoney Nation and Indigenous peoples with respecting their right to heal
- Create a more culturally comfortable space to increase the level of inclusion of Indigenous peoples in our community

Historical Overview of Truth and Reconciliation¹

According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Indian Residential Schools date back to the 1870's. The policy behind the government funded, church-run schools attempted to “kill the Indian in the child.” Over 130 residential schools were located across the country, with the last one closing in 1996.

In the Bow Valley, The McDougall Orphanage and School, which was managed by the United Church, operated in Morley from 1883 to 1969.²

More than 150,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were taken from their families and placed in these schools. Many were forbidden to speak their language and practice their own culture. Many suffered emotional, physical and sexual abuse, and others died while attending these schools. The

¹ <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=3>

² <http://thechildrenremembered.ca/school-locations/morley/>

unresolved trauma suffered by former students has been passed on from generation to generation.

The 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) report recognized that the future must include a place for those affected by Indian Residential Schools, so as to enable them to stand with dignity, to remember, to voice their sorrow and anger and to be listened to with respect.

Following the RCAP report, Gathering Strength, Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan was unveiled. This included a Statement of Reconciliation acknowledging the Government of Canada's role in the development and administration of Indian residential schools.

In 2001, the federal Office of Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada was created to manage and resolve the large number of abuse claims filed by former students against the federal government. In 2004, an Assembly of First Nations Report on Canada's Dispute Resolution Plan to Compensate for Abuses in Indian Residential Schools led to discussions to develop a holistic, fair, and lasting resolution of the legacy of Indian Residential Schools. This resulted in the negotiated Settlement Agreement that was approved by all parties and implemented on September 19, 2007.

The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) was approved by the Courts and came into effect on September 19, 2007. Establishing a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was one of several measures set out in this agreement to address the legacy of the Indian Residential School system.

The Indian Residential Schools TRC was established on June 1, 2008, with a mandate of 5 years as an independent body that oversaw a process to provide former students and anyone who has been affected by the Indian Residential Schools legacy, with an opportunity to share their individual experiences in a safe and culturally appropriate manner. After listening to student experiences, the work of the TRC was to create a forward looking process of truth, healing and reconciliation.

Canada's TRC is unique from other commissions around the world in that its scope was primarily focused on the experiences of children. Its focus of research spanned more than 100 years, one of the longest durations ever examined. It is also the first court-ordered truth commission to be established. Its mandate was to inform all Canadians about what happened in Indian Residential Schools (IRS). The Commission documented the truth of survivors, families, communities and anyone personally affected by the IRS experience.

The TRC's hope was to guide and inspire Aboriginal peoples and Canadians in a process of reconciliation and renewed relationships that are based on mutual understanding and respect, or "right relations," which means that we strive to live out the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and build respectful relationships with Aboriginal peoples.

On June 11, 2008, the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Government of Canada, issued an apology in the House of Commons to former students, their families and communities. The apology is considered by many as a step towards reconciliation.

On December 15, 2015, the TRC released its findings and final report, which included a report of 94 Calls to Action for all Canadians.

Town of Canmore actions to date

The Town of Canmore is located in Treaty 7 lands and both the organization and the community have a long history of relations with our Indigenous neighbours. Some of the ways we have worked to be good neighbours include:

Arts and Events Programming

- Inclusion of Indigenous artists and speakers in Town of Canmore event programming including Festival of Eagles, Mountain Market, WILD, Winter Carnival, Mayors Awards, Parade and Opening Ceremonies for ski events, Olympic Torch Relay, and Three Sisters Gallery
- Encouraging Indigenous and multi-cultural peoples in the text for public art calls
- Stoney Elder outreach coordination to meet with public art shortlisted artists for the Cougar Creek public art project

Relationship building

- Relationship building between Stoney Elders, Admin, and Mayor Borrowman
- Blessing ceremony with Chiniki Band
- Blessing ceremony before 2017 National Aboriginal Day event
- National Aboriginal Day Parade and BBQ in June 2016 and 2017 and in budget for 2018
- Canada 150 mural project incorporates theme of reconciliation and participation with students and elders from Morley
- Town staff participating in Bow Valley TRC working group with other municipalities and community organizations

Sport

- Relationship building between Pond Hockey organization and Morley

Education

- Staff and Council attendance at Truth and Reconciliation Summit at The Banff Centre – November 2016
- Indigenous awareness workshops for town staff and community

Inclusion

- All FCSS and BVPL workshops are open to all individuals, regardless of their residency
- A proportion of grocery cards are reserved for individuals who live on reserve

- BVPL has incorporated Indigenous-based children activities, books
- Grant writing support to non-profit groups in Morley
- Toc applied for Human Rights and Multiculturalism Fund Grant to address community inclusion in the Bow Valley
- Consultation on land rights for flood mitigation projects

To date, these relations have been ad hoc and not coordinated organizationally. In the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation, we wish to build on and strengthen our relationship, to do our best to operate in right relations, and to support reconciliation. There are multiple TRC Calls to Action that the Town of Canmore can commit to work to address to the best of our ability.

Calls to Action going forward

In reviewing the 94 Calls to Action, the Town of Canmore can play a role in leading or advancing 15 Actions. This section identifies those actions and what the Town of Canmore can commit to working toward along with the required resources and timelines for each action.

Child Welfare - Action 1

We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and aboriginal governments to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care by:

- ii. Providing adequate resources to enable Aboriginal communities and child-welfare organizations to keep Aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so, and to keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Support the on-reserve women’s shelter as requested	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing

Child Welfare - Action 5

We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Share parenting resources and support the development of an indigenous-based parenting program	Future budget request	2019 and beyond

Education - Action 12

We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Incorporate Indigenous books, posters, images, and stories into BVPL and FCSS programs and spaces	Available within current budget	Ongoing
Work with community partners to ensure that messaging (such as sexual assault awareness campaign) is culturally relevant for Indigenous people	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing

Language and Culture - Action 14

We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:

- i. Aboriginal languages are fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.
- iv. The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Consult with Stoney peoples to determine what/where appropriate. Some examples could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Translate public art calls into regional indigenous languages ○ Incorporate Indigenous names into trails/public spaces ○ Translate signage (welcome, streets, parks) into Stoney where appropriate 	Future budget request	2019 and beyond

Canadian Governments and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People – Action 43

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Partner with community to seek funding for projects that strengthen Indigenous relationships	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing

Professional Development and Training for Public Servants Action 57

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Include these topics in education, training, and development opportunities for Town of Canmore staff	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing
Explore opportunities to develop meaningful relationships, learn about Indigenous history, and understand what we can incorporate about Canada’s Indigenous history in public spaces (website, Civic Centre, Rec Centre, Elevation Place)	Future budget request	2019 and beyond
Create an action plan to gather, learn and write the Bow Valley’s Indigenous History	Future budget request	2019 and beyond

Education for Reconciliation Action 63

We call upon the council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues including:

- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Include understanding, empathy, and mutual respect and appreciation of Indigenous culture into our school aged programming	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing
Partner with local schools on their efforts to address Truth and Reconciliation	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing
Continue to host and build on National Aboriginal Day community celebrations	Available within current budget.	Annual

Youth Programs Action 66

We call upon the federal government to establish multi-year funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation, and establish a national network to share information and best practices. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Explore options for incorporating Indigenous neighbours and culture into programs like Big Fun Camps and Healthy Little Chefs	Opportunities may arise through current relationships and Bow Valley TRC working group. Could also include a future budget request.	Ongoing
Share resources with community based youth organizations	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Action 78

We call upon the Government of Canada to commit to making a funding contribution of \$10 million over seven years to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, plus an additional amount to assist communities to research and produce histories of their own residential school experience and their involvement in truth, healing, and reconciliation. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Partner with local individuals and/or organizations who seek to access funding to research and produce histories of residential school experiences relevant to Canmore and our community	Opportunities may arise through current relationships and Bow Valley TRC working group. Could also include a future budget request.	2019 and beyond

Commemoration Action 79

We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage commemoration. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Engage with artists and community to include indigenous programming in public art and community events	Opportunities may arise through current relationships and Bow Valley TRC working group. Could also include a future budget request.	Ongoing
Support Orange Shirt Day as a way to raise awareness about residential schools	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing

Commemoration Action 82

We call upon provincial and territorial governments, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools Monument in each capital city to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Feature monuments as they are commissioned or completed in the Arts and Events newsletter	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing

Commemoration Action 83

We call upon the Canada Council for the Arts to establish, as a funding priority, a strategy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Create opportunities to live in right relations and appreciate Indigenous history as outlined in Tools for the Future	Future budget request	2019 and beyond
Use Town channels to make artists aware of funding opportunities through the Canada Council as they are available	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing
Include youth from Stoney Nakoda in the Kid's Art program	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing
Continue to work with Bow Valley communities from	Opportunities may arise through current relationships	Ongoing

Morley to Lake Louise on collaborative projects that contribute to the reconciliation process	and Bow Valley TRC working group. Could also include a future budget request.	
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Sports and Recreation Action 87

We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organization, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Work with Bow Valley True Sport Council to incorporate Indigenous education and history	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing
Offer anti-racism awareness and training programs for our sport partners	Future budget request	2019 and beyond
Look for opportunities to invite Indigenous athletes to be guest speakers and/or profiled in our sport facilities	Future budget request	2019 and beyond

Sports and Recreation Action 88

We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth, and continued support for North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host the games and for provincial and territorial team preparation and travel. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Look to partner with and provide support for Spirit North, a program run by Canmore local Beckie Scott, whose mission is to engage and empower Indigenous children through sport, activity, and inspiration	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing

Sports and Recreation Action 89

We call upon the federal government to amend the Physical Activity and Sport Act to support reconciliation by ensuring that policies to promote physical activity as a fundamental element of health and well-being, reduce barriers to sports participation, increase the pursuit of excellence in sport, and build capacity in Canadian sport system, are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Work with community sport and recreation groups to encourage participation of individuals from Morley and reduce barriers to participation	Available within current budget. Required staff time as available.	Ongoing

Sports and Recreation Action 91

We call upon the officials and host countries of international sporting events such as the Olympics, Pan Am, and Commonwealth games to ensure that Indigenous peoples' territorial protocols are respected, and local Indigenous communities are engaged in all aspects of planning and participating in such events. The Town of Canmore can commit to:

Action	Resources Required	Timeline
Advocate for the inclusion of Stoney representatives in an Olympic bid should one go forward	Staff and Council time	Dependent on Calgary Olympic bid decision
Respect territorial protocols if an Olympic bid is granted	Staff and Council time	Dependent on Calgary Olympic bid decision

“Reconciliation is about forging and maintaining respectful relationships. There are no shortcuts.” -Justice Murray Sinclair, Truth and Reconciliation Commission