



OCTOBER 2025

**TRUTH AND
RECONCILIATION
COMMISSION CALLS TO
ACTION: CITY OF QUESNEL
TEN YEAR PROGRESS
UPDATE**

**Municipal Progress
(2015-2025)**



The content in this report may be distressing or triggering to some readers. It discusses topics related to the residential school system, colonial violence, and the lasting impacts of these policies on Indigenous Peoples, families, and communities.

We recognize that engaging with this content can bring up strong emotions and painful memories. Please take care while reading, and step away if needed. Support is available if you are in distress or need someone to talk to.

A National Residential School Crisis Line has been set up to provide support to former students. This 24-Hour Crisis Line can be accessed at: 1-866-925-4419.

The Hope for Wellness Help Line is available for Indigenous Peoples across Canada. The 24-Hour Line can be accessed at: 1-855-242-3310. An online chat is available at www.hopeforwellness.ca

These services offer culturally safe and confidential support. Please reach out if you need help.

If you are looking for more information about residential schools and victims, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has a database of all institutions recognized in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) along with list of names of children who died or went missing. <https://nctr.ca/residential-schools/british-columbia/>



Summary

The City of Quesnel and its partner organizations have demonstrated its commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and residential school survivors. There has been significant progress toward responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Calls to Action. Key to reconciliation, the City has made an effort to build relationships with nations and integrate Indigenous perspectives and history in its activities. There are more actions the City can take in the future to improve upon this, and to move towards a complete incorporation of the Calls to Action.

Introduction

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) released a report that included 94 Calls to Action for governments in Canada to address actions that advance meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Municipal Governments have a direct connection to many of these Calls to Action. This report includes actions taken by the City of Quesnel and the RCMP as they are partially funded by the City.

In the ten years since the TRC's report, the City of Quesnel and partner organizations have taken steps towards achieving these goals. The purpose of this report is to identify which calls to action are relevant to municipal operations and partner organizations and to share what meaningful steps have been taken towards addressing them. This provides an opportunity for the City to assess its progress, to see where future actions can be taken, and to contribute to the larger TRC review. It allows Quesnel to see how it is performing compared to other municipalities and for staff and Council to have a chance to reflect on the city's partnership and collaboration with local First Nations governments. This will help the City benchmark its path forward intentionally and take the appropriate steps to continue towards reconciliation.



Calls to Action Related To RCMP

Call to Action 30	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>We call upon federal, provincial and territorial governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in custody over the next decade, and to issue detailed annual reports that monitor and evaluate progress while doing so.</p>	<p>Quesnel RCMP has worked to reduce Indigenous overrepresentation in custody through preventative and restorative approaches.</p> <p>Indigenous Policing Services works closely with Indigenous groups to develop approaches that meet the unique needs of different Nations. This involves collaboration with Nations to explore culturally appropriate interventions.</p> <p>Cultural competency, bias awareness, and restorative justice training for RCMP officers.</p> <p>Mobile Crisis Intervention team is essential to address mental health crisis and prevent charges.</p> <p><i>Note: First Nations people are disproportionately represented in Canadian jails due to the lasting impacts of colonialism and systemic discrimination within the criminal justice system, rather than solely by factors like poverty or addiction, which are often used to explain higher Indigenous incarceration rates. While Indigenous people make up only 5% of Canada's population, they represent a significant portion of the incarcerated population, with figures around 32% in federal prisons and 42% in provincial jails in 2022/2023. This overrepresentation is a complex issue rooted in historical and ongoing systemic disadvantages that lead to higher rates of offending and contact with the justice system.</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Next Steps</p> <p>Continue to recognize and to work with Nations and community groups to address systemic issues that contribute to Indigenous overrepresentation in the justice system and develop culturally appropriate solutions.</p> <p>Determine if there is an evaluation process to monitor progress towards reduction of Indigenous overrepresentation. If there is not, encourage the development of one.</p>



Call to Action 34	Progress and Actions Taken			
<p>We call upon the governments of Canada, the provinces and territories to undertake reforms in the criminal justice system to better address the needs of offenders with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Providing increased community resources and powers for courts to ensure that FASD is properly diagnosed, and that appropriate community supports are in place for those with FASD. iii. Providing community, correctional, and parole resources to maximize the ability of people with FASD to live in the community. iv. Adopting appropriate evaluation mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of such programs and ensure community safety. 	<p>Although they are not FASD-specific, RCMP and municipal emergency services training includes working with individuals with various physical and cognitive impairments.</p> <p><i>Note: First Nations people are disproportionately affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in Canada due to a complex interplay of historical and ongoing colonialism, intergenerational trauma, and resulting social issues like poverty, racism, and limited access to resources. While FASD affects all populations, its impact is magnified in Indigenous communities, partly because of the enduring trauma from the residential school system and dispossession, which can contribute to increased rates of alcohol use during pregnancy and difficulties accessing support services.</i></p> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="461 793 1536 856">Next Steps</th> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="461 856 1536 1635"> <p>Continue to support understanding of individuals with physical and cognitive impairments.</p> </td> </tr>	Next Steps		<p>Continue to support understanding of individuals with physical and cognitive impairments.</p>
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Calls to Action Related To Municipality

Call to Action 40	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>We call on all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, to create adequately funded and accessible Aboriginal-specific victim programs and services with appropriate evaluation mechanisms</p>	<p>Victims services staff receive training on trauma informed care and Indigenous cultural sensitivity.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Next Steps</p>
	<p>Continue to engage with local Nations to develop appropriate victims service programs that are culturally appropriate.</p> <p>Support Indigenous-specific victims services initiatives.</p>

Call to Action 43	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>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.</p>	<p>Principles of UNDRIP integrated in ongoing mandatory learning for RCMP, including integration of voices of Indigenous groups to facilitate cultural understanding.</p>
	<p>Council discussed an objective to consider signing on to the UNDRIP and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.</p>
	<p>Museum supports and facilitates repatriation of Nations artifacts from the permanent collection and other donated items.</p> <p>First Nations consultation included in new emergency management plans and risk assessments.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Next Steps</p>
	<p>Encourage council to discuss UNDRIP/DRIPPA and Calls to Action from the TRC during Council and Council to Council meetings with local Nations.</p> <p>Consider increasing Council to Council meetings with local Nations.</p>



Call to Action 47	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.</p>	<p>The Quesnel Museum has actively revised its narratives to include more Indigenous perspectives and challenge colonial assumptions. While First Nation history has always been present at the Museum, there has been a shift from pioneer focused exhibits to inclusive historical interpretation.</p> <p>The City of Quesnel and its partners officially recognize that they operate on the Traditional Territory of the Lhtako Dene, both in spoken word and signage, and the Visitors Center raises the Lhtako Dene flag.</p> <p>Archeologist present during many municipal construction and public works projects to ensure artifacts or remains are properly handled, any findings are distributed to local First Nation Bands.</p> <p>City Council expanded acknowledgment to include the multitude of Nations and Indigenous Peoples that call Quesnel home, and include a written acknowledgment printed on each Council and Committee agenda.</p>
	<p>Next Steps</p>
	<p>Continue to support dismantling concepts outlined in the call to action.</p>



Call to Action 57	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>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.</p>	<p>Ongoing cultural understanding and anti-racism training for RCMP, incorporating Indigenous voices and experience. UNDRIP/DRIPPA, Residential schools, and Indigenous rights are included in this.</p> <p>Council members and select City staff received Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility training to understand colonialism, institutional oppression, cultural safety, and Indigenous value systems.</p> <p>Staff education on Indigenous cultural practices enables informed decisions that support cultural activities – such as granting fire permits for ceremonial and traditional fires.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Next Steps</p> <p>Continue to support learning with training, open dialogue and discussion with Nations and Band Members.</p> <p>Recirculate training opportunity to Council by the first quarter of 2026.</p> <p>Include training in information package given to newly elected Council members.</p> <p>Consider cultural safety and humility training for bylaw officers and emergency responders under Fire Services.</p>



Call to Action 75	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>We call upon the federal government to work with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, churches, Aboriginal communities, former residential school students, and current landowners to develop and implement strategies and procedures for the ongoing identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries or other sites where residential school children were buried. This is to include the provision of Calls to Action 9 appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased children.</p>	<p>Quesnel did not have Residential schools in the immediate area. Indigenous children were sent to St Joseph’s (Cariboo) in Williams Lake or Lejac (Stuart Lake). The City undertakes a supportive role for memorial events when invited by Nations. Plans for a commemorative installation at City Hall were explored, however after consultation with the local Nations, this project is not moving forward at this time.</p> <p>The Museum does not have documents related to children in residential schools, however, are open to examining records and supporting those who are looking for more information.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Next Steps</p> <p>Continue to support efforts towards healing from traumas related to Residential schools and initiatives to uncover information about residential school cemeteries or other sites where residential school children were buried.</p> <p>Council could acknowledge the harms done by residential schools through a formal resolution.</p> <p>Look at opportunities to enter formal MOA or MOU’s with all local Nations that acknowledges the harms done by residential schools.</p>



Call to Action 79	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration. This would include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>i. Amending the Historic Sites and Monuments Act to include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and its Secretariat.</p> <p>ii. Revising the policies, criteria, and practices of the National Program of Historical Commemoration to integrate Indigenous history, heritage values, and memory practices into Canada’s national heritage and history.</p> <p>iii. Developing and implementing a national heritage plan and strategy for commemorating residential school sites, the history and legacy of residential schools, and the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canada’s history.</p>	<p>Museum offers heritage interpretation and cultural programming to reflect Indigenous histories and perspectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral history collection projects with local Nations - Basket-making workshops and cultural skills revitalization - Artifact repatriation efforts and formal MOU requests to other museums - Indigenous education programs delivered in local schools. - Photomural project that highlights local First Nations Histories in public spaces <p>Quesnel Museum and Archives provides free admission to local First Nations Peoples.</p> <p>Ongoing efforts to include Indigenous sculptures and art in Lhtako Dene Park.</p> <p>Riverfront Trail interpretive signs include local Indigenous perspectives and history.</p> <p>Since 1999, there is an annual Memorial Day dedicated to the six T̓silhqot’in chiefs executed in 1864. There is a small sign, and intention to build a formal commemorative sculpture and sign at the spot of the hangings.</p>
	<p>Next Steps</p>
	<p>Continue relationship building with local Nations to expand knowledge sharing.</p>



Call to Action 87	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organizations, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history</p>	<p>There are no actions taken toward this Call to Action yet.</p>
	<p>Next Steps</p>
	<p>The City and Regional District could consider a designated space for Indigenous athletes in sports hall of fame program at West Fraser Centre Arena. This could include previous athletes, and an Indigenous athlete award in addition to the three existing awards presented by the North Cariboo Joint Advisory Committee.</p>

Call to Action 88	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth, and continued support for the North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host the games and for provincial and territorial team preparation and travel.</p>	<p>Lhtako Quesnel 2024 BC Winter Games integrated traditional games in event night.</p>
	<p>Some RCMP members and City Councillors attend annual Lhtako Dene Powwow as invited guests.</p>
	<p>Recreation services create accessible opportunities and attempt to remove any barriers by working directly with local Nations.</p>
	<p>Next Steps</p>
	<p>Continue to support Indigenous sport development through recreation services.</p>



Call to Action 93	Progress and Actions Taken
<p>We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the national Aboriginal organizations, to revise the information kit for newcomers to Canada and its citizenship test to reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including Calls to Action 11 information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools.</p>	<p>Visitors guide references the history of the Lhtako Dene.</p> <p>Quesnel District Museum provides resources and information about local First Nations.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Next Steps</p> <p>Include information on Lhtako Dene, Nazko First Nation, ʔEsdilagh First Nation, and Lhoosk'uz Dene Nation in next update to Relocation Package and Welcome Guide.</p>

DRIPPA

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPPA) is legislation from the Province of British Columbia that aims to align the Province’s laws with the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). While DRIPPA is directed by the Province, it establishes expectations that influence local governments as the legislation and policy changes to reflect Indigenous rights, self-determination, and shared decision making. The two pieces of legislation most likely to change the roles or responsibilities of local governments are the Community Charter, and the Local Government Act. At the time of this report, these have not yet been updated to align with UNDRIP through DRIPPA.

The Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) is one of the Provincial legislation pieces that has been updated and effects the municipality. EDMA requires local governments to prepare risk assessments and emergency management plans for their jurisdictions, while consulting and cooperating with First Nations governments whose traditional territory is in the local government’s jurisdiction.

While few examples of UNDRIP and DRIPPA implementation in municipalities exist, The City of Vancouver UNDRIP Action Plan 2024-2028 includes the subject highlights of relationship building; redress, housing and land; cultural presence; stewardship and addressing environmental racism; and communication and accountability. Vancouver provides an example of what implementation of UNDRIP and DRIPPA could look like.



Progress Highlights

- Restorative justice and diversion programs in partnership with Indigenous organizations.
- Museum transformation to integrate Indigenous perspectives in heritage interpretation.
- Free admission to Quesnel Museum for Indigenous Peoples
- Cultural training received by senior City staff, RCMP officers and Council
- Expansion of land acknowledgment to include the multitude of Nations and Indigenous Peoples that call Quesnel home and written acknowledgment printed on each Council and Committee agenda.
- Support for Indigenous-led community projects and events.
- 2017 Memorandum of Understanding with Lhtako Dene.
- Lhtako Quesnel BC Winter Games.
- Community Forest partnership.
- First Nations culture inspired crosswalks.
- Every Child Matters Street Banners displayed every September.
- Archeologist in many City construction projects to ensure sensitive handling of historical material.
- Coordinated Community Wildfire Protection Plans.
- Forest and Landscape Planning.
- Park renamed to Lhtako Dene park; culturally relevant installations including sculptures, plants, and interpretive signs.
- Memorial for T̓silhqot'in Chiefs.
- Collaborative tables including seat for Nations.
- Emergency management through EDMA integrating Indigenous consultation and traditional knowledge.
- RCMP commitment to their relationship with local nations, they actively work towards a better understanding of culture and practices to avoid traumatization, this includes ceremonial fires and death protocols.
- RCMP seeking to show commitment where they are welcome.
- Interpretive signs along riverfront share local First Nations history.
- Fire permit from City Fire Chief for cultural and ceremonial fires.

Additionally, there are ongoing projects and actions that contribute towards Truth and Reconciliation, including:



- Council to Council meetings with Nations.
- Ongoing relationship building between Nations and municipal elected officials, staff and RCMP.
- Anti-racism and cultural sensitivity training for staff and Council.
- Support for Indigenous led initiatives such as the annual Powwow and other cultural events.

The City of Quesnel supports a Cultural Centre initiative from Lhtako Dene Nation. Architect commissioned to draw up plans for the centre to be built in Lhtako Dene Park. Project is on hold until funding can be secured. Multiple grants have been applied for. At this point, a new location may be necessary because of complications with the area of the park. The City should continue to support this project if it moves forward by providing Lhtako Dene with assistance navigating grant applications, and zoning and building regulation processes.

Following a discussion with Nations, the City of Quesnel commissioned a mock-up of a site for a Residential School commemoration located beside City Hall. After discussions with members and Residential school survivors, there was no consensus of where this project should be built, and if it should be built. Project is not moving forward currently. If a project like this is identified in the future, consultation should be completed before any planning begins.

Conclusion

Over the last decade, the City of Quesnel and partner organizations have taken meaningful steps towards reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Progress has been visible through initiatives such as integrating Indigenous perspectives in museum exhibits and educational programming, implementing cultural and anti-racism training for staff and RCMP, expanding restorative justice initiatives, and formally recognizing traditional territory and history of local First Nations. These actions reflect a commitment to reconciliation through collaboration, education, and respect for Indigenous culture and rights.

At the same time, this report highlights next steps and where progress has slowed or is incomplete. Projects such as the Residential School Commemoration and proposed Cultural Centre show both the importance of consultation with Nations and the challenges of securing resources and consensus for long-term initiatives. These are



opportunities to continue an open dialogue, expand partnerships, and ensure that reconciliation efforts are guided by Indigenous priorities.

Looking to the future, it is important to remember that reconciliation is an ongoing process of learning and relationship building. The City of Quesnel should remain committed to supporting Indigenous led initiatives, partnerships and relationship building, all while integrating the principles of UNDRIP and DRIPPA into policy and practice. By doing so, Quesnel can continue to build strong relationships with Lhtako Dene, Nazko, ʔEsdilagh, and Lhoosk'uz Dene Nations, and contribute meaningfully to national reconciliation.