

Subject: Athabasca Tribal Council Cultural Festival - Funding Request**APPROVALS:****Jamie Doyle**_____
Director_____
Chief Administrative Officer**Recommended Motion:**

1. THAT the request from the Athabasca Tribal Council (ATC) for \$150,000 to support the 2022 ATC Cultural Festival, be approved and allocated from the emerging issues reserve.
2. THAT Administration work towards a sustainable source of funding that is in alignment with the ongoing municipal response to truth and reconciliation to be included within future Indigenous and Rural Relations Operational Budgets for Council's consideration.

Summary:

On March 8, 2022, Chief Allan Adam, President ATC and Chief of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN), and Karla Buffalo, Chief Executive Officer, ATC presented information on the ATC Cultural Festival and requested \$150,000 in funding to support the event. Following a motion from Mayor Bowman, Council referred the matter to Administration for review and requested that Administration return to Council with a report outlining how the funding request could be considered.

Background:

The ATC Cultural Festival is scheduled to take place from September 8 - 11, 2022, and builds on the success of the first event held in 2019, which saw over 5,000 participants. The four-day event will deliver a festival experience that fosters the development of the diverse and distinctive Indigenous culture in northern Alberta. It is an important experience that celebrates and showcases Indigenous art and history, creating a more culturally inclusive community with new and exciting opportunities for tourism and economic development.

Alternatives:

Deny the request from ATC for \$150,000 in funding to support the Cultural Festival.

Budget/Financial Implications:

Funds in the amount of \$150,000 to be released from the emerging issues reserve.

Rationale for Recommendation:

Celebrating and supporting Indigenous culture is an essential step on the path towards successful reconciliation. In addition to strengthening relationships with ATC and local First Nations and Métis partners, supporting the Cultural Festival would advance several of the Calls to Action within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) final report. Specifically, Calls to Action 61, 62, and 63 which focus on culture revitalization and Calls to Action 13 and 14 which focus on language revitalization.

Culture is essential to the overall well-being of Indigenous communities and individuals and has been shown to be a protective factor against the breakdown of physical and mental health. The legacy of residential schools and colonial policies like the *Indian Act* have resulted in severe negative impacts to cultural identity and continuity. These systems and their policies were intended to assimilate Indigenous Peoples by forbidding youth and communities to speak their traditional language or practice their traditional customs and ceremonies.

To advance reconciliation, the TRC recognized the need for permanent funding that would support cultural revitalization and continuity. The Municipality has expressed its commitment to the ongoing process of reconciliation and has formally adopted several Calls to Action. The ATC Cultural Festival aligns with several municipal priorities such as downtown revitalization, regional economic development, and rural and Indigenous communities and partnerships. Supporting the Cultural Festival is an opportunity to reaffirm the Municipality's commitment to reconciliation while establishing itself as a leader for other municipalities in the province and the country to follow.

Strategic Priorities:

Responsible Government
Rural and Indigenous Communities and Partnerships

Attachments:

1. Athabasca Tribal Council-CF2022-RMWB Presentation