

# City of Saskatoon Reconciliation Visual Identity

## **Our Journey to a Reconciliation Visual Identity**

In 2019, as part of a no-cost Reconciliation Action and Measurement Pilot Project, the City was able to have the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) review and measure the City's progress in the area of Reconciliation. This was in order to identify any gaps as well as ways to increase the impact of our work. The result was a report prepared by the OTC's Evaluation Team in partnership with the City's Community of Practice (City employees from various divisions who act as change champions in the area of Truth & Reconciliation). The report is entitled *Assessing and Advancing the City of Saskatoon's Journey Toward Truth, Reconciliation and Treaty Implementation*.

The report was received by the City in January 2020 and indicated a critical need for the City to better promote its Reconciliation work amongst City staff and in the larger community. It was noted that the City's Reconciliation work was significant. However, there was very little visibility beyond those directly involved. This in turn was resulting in a reduced overall impact.

It was recommended that the City create a communications strategy and design marketing materials. One of the ways the City decided to address the issue of low visibility was to create a distinct Reconciliation Visual Identity. The objective of the visual identity was to help to depict the Reconciliation work happening at the City of Saskatoon internally to City employees *and* externally to residents and visitors.

The creation of a visual identity was intended to assist residents and visitors in their awareness and understanding of the City's journey to Reconciliation. The hope was that it would become recognizable as a prompt for activities, events, and opportunities related to Reconciliation. That it would communicate to employees and residents alike that our City is one that is proud of its history and inclusive to all.

## **Reconciliation Visual Identity External Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee)**

In spring 2022, the City engaged a group of 12 community members involved with Reconciliation work in Saskatoon. The group was comprised of people of different ages, backgrounds, and lived experiences. It included several Knowledge Keepers, Residential School Survivors, and Elders.

*Members: Jennifer Altenberg, Wilfred Burton, Carrie Catherine, Nora Cummings, Rick Daniels, Corine Eyahpaise, Judy Greyeyes, Florence Highway, Gilbert Kewistep, Evelyn Linklater, Dorah Montgrand, Judy Pelly*

Métis brand specialist Colin McFadyen of National Brand was contracted by the City to design the visual identity based on the ideas advanced by the Advisory Committee.

The first meeting with the Advisory Committee was held in August 2022. Colin McFadyen was also invited to attend this meeting to hear the committee's input directly. The members were provided with background on what the City was looking to do and why. The Advisory Committee was led through a series of visioning exercises where they were asked to brainstorm the words and imagery that came to mind when they thought about Reconciliation work at the City of Saskatoon and in our community. The ideas gathered at this workshop were many and they were inspirational, positive, and thoughtful.

In the months that followed, City staff and National Brand worked together to refine two options for a visual identity. The options were presented to the Advisory Committee in October 2022 where they chose the option they preferred. It was important to ensure that the visual identity was one that spoke to them and instilled a sense of pride, belonging, and inclusivity. We are very grateful for their involvement.

The chosen option was officially approved and adopted by the City in January 2023.

### **Use of Our Visual Identity**

The Reconciliation Visual Identity is for the use of the City of Saskatoon. It's suggested that City departments contact the City's Indigenous Initiatives Department to consult on appropriate uses and application. There may also be times when the City grants approval to external partners for use of the visual identity on collaborative projects—written permission must be obtained in these instances.

The visual identity will appear in civic communications, activities, and spaces to communicate the City's commitment to Reconciliation and to increase awareness and understanding about Indigenous peoples and our city's history. It's intended to communicate to employees and residents that we are an inclusive and welcoming place.

Applications of the visual identity may include things such as: web content, videos, posters, banners, signage, e-newsletters, decals, flags, social media, advertising, reports/brochures/printed materials, news releases/PSAs, message boards, billboards, monuments/parks/other placemaking fixtures, infographics, and other as identified.



## Reconciliation Visual Identity

The City of Saskatoon's Reconciliation Visual Identity is a distinct brand that identifies us and our work towards truth and reconciliation. The City of Saskatoon works as an advocate and connector for truth and reconciliation. The concept builds on the ideas of the Medicine Wheel with connectivity, partnership, advocacy, and iconic City of Saskatoon landmarks.

### Inner Circle

Treaty promises were made to last “as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and rivers flow”. The centre of the wheel depicts this as well as representing our physical make-up (river and green prairie), the City of Saskatoon (colour palette), 2 of the 4 elements of matter (water and earth), and showcasing the beauty and pride that is Indigenous beadwork.



### Outer Circle

The number 4 is sacred to many Indigenous people. It is no coincidence that the medicine wheel has 4 parts, that there are 4 seasons, 4 elements, 4 directions, or 4 stages of life. Often, giving thanks to the Creator mentions the 4 elements (earth, wind, water, fire), the 4 seasons, 4 directions, 4 colours of humanity, 4 chambers of the heart, 4 quadrants of the body, and 4 sections of the brains.

4 puffs are taken when the ceremonial pipe is smoked and water is poured 4 times over the hot rocks in the sweat lodge.

The colours represent:

White (The North, wind)  
Yellow (The East, fire)  
Blue (The South, water)  
Red (The West, earth)

Saskatoon's Inuit persons are represented in the North/White quadrant of the Medicine Wheel.

The trusses represent our city of bridges as well as the use of tension and compression to create a strong foundation of interconnectivity.

## Circle of Icons

A circle of icons set in Indigenous beadwork sits inside the medicine wheel. Each icon represents cultural and action items. These icons carry through the ideas of connectivity, partnership, and advocacy.

