



# Staff Report

## Planning & Building Services

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**Report To:** COW - Operations, Planning and Building Services  
**Meeting Date:** April 8, 2025  
**Report Number:** PBS.25.022  
**Title:** Response to Shared Path Indigenous Collaborative Hub Budget Request  
**Prepared by:** Adam Smith, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

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### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive Staff Report PBS.25.022, entitled "Response to Shared Path Indigenous Collaborative Hub Budget Request";

AND THAT Council support in-kind contributions related to staff time in the development of an Indigenous Collaborative Hub.

### B. Overview

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At the February 3, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting, the Shared Path Consultation Initiative presented a proposal to Council regarding an Indigenous Collaborative Hub in the Southern Georgian Bay area. This staff report offers a response to the deputation and potential resourcing that can be made available to support the initiative.

### C. Background

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In 2024, staff participated in a meeting facilitated by Shared Path that was inclusive of municipalities, indigenous communities, and conservation authorities in the region. The intent of the *Our Shared History Workshop* was to; network and build relationships, learn about each other, our work, and responsibilities, and move beyond concerns into collaboration. The following specific tools, strategies, and ideas for collaboration identified included:

- streamlining engagement with Indigenous communities;
- supporting Indigenous peoples to contribute fully in community planning, decision making and governance;
- a planning tool for information sharing that builds upon existing mapping resources
- a formalized consultation hub to serve as a new communication channel between neighboring communities, e.g. starting with policy reviews

As next steps, there was discussion on exploring the development of a Collaborative Hub, serving as Joint tables or committees for reconciliation, land management, and dialogue on cumulative impacts. One leading example presented was the Muskoka Area Indigenous Leadership (MAILT), where First Nations and municipalities are dedicated to working together, starting on a political level, leader-to-leader round table format, where any member can add agenda items of mutual interest. From there, both Municipal staff and First Nation staff lead working groups that take action on recommendations from the leadership table. It was suggested that similar tables should be in place in Simcoe and Grey Counties.

Since that time, senior staff at the County of Grey, County of Simcoe, Town of Collingwood and Town of The Blue Mountains have met with Shared Path to scope out a future leadership table in the region. In support of this effort, the Ontario Professional Planners' Institute (OPPI) has provided a conditional contribution of \$35,000. In response, the Acting CAO issued a letter of support noting our willingness to consider the dedication of either staff or financial resources to support the initiative. On February 18, 2025, Council passed the following resolution in response to the deputation seeking support for the development of an Indigenous Collaborative Hub in the area:

THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains receives for information the deputation of Carolyn King, President and Board Chair, David Stinson, Vice Chair, and Natalija Vojno, Coordinator, My Shared Path Re: Request for Council Support for an Indigenous Collaborative Hub and funding for 2025 and 2026;

AND THAT Council direct the Planning Department to provide a staff report in response to the deputation, for Council consideration;

AND THAT Council direct staff to forward the deputation materials to Grey County for consideration.

## **D. Analysis**

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Since the deputation of Shared Path, the County of Grey has also provided a letter of support that is enclosed within this report. It notes the dedication of staff time to the initiative but does not include additional budget to match the OPPI contribution. At the time of this staff report it is unclear as to whether there will be contributions from the Town of Collingwood and County of Simcoe. Among the challenges in implementing the model is determining the catchment area of the Hub, given that the Southern Georgian Bay region encompasses many municipalities, conservation authorities and indigenous communities. In maximizing participation, the best outcomes can be achieved in terms of consistency between agencies and municipalities in the engagement of Indigenous communities.

In response to the request by Shared Path and the resolution passed by Council, staff can be dedicated to support the initiative be it attending meetings, providing information and adjusting practices to reflect upon the learnings through Shared Path. In reviewing the Planning Division's 2025 Budget, there are limited means to support the direct activities of the Hub beyond in-kind contributions as noted above. Planning does not have a dedicated budget this

year to provide grants to external groups beyond the Community Improvement Plan program, however, does maintain a budget of \$75,000 for consulting services. While the intent of this budget is to retain third-party planning support when vacancies exist and workload is high, it can be leveraged to support smaller-scale policy related projects. Through additional dialogue with Shared Path there may be an opportunity to identify a Town-led project that can assist with building relationships with Indigenous communities.

## **E. Strategic Priorities**

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### **1. Communication and Engagement**

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

### **2. Organizational Excellence**

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

### **3. Community**

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

### **4. Quality of Life**

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

## **F. Environmental Impacts**

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N/A

## **G. Financial Impacts**

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The Town can support the initiative through in-kind support and has \$75,000 dedicated towards consultant support that may be able to be leveraged in order to improve consultation with Indigenous communities and support the Town's ability to advance an Indigenous Collaborative Hub.

## **H. In Consultation With**

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N/A

## I. Public Engagement

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The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Adam Smith, Acting Chief Administrative Officer [cao@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:cao@thebluemountains.ca).

## J. Attached

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1. Grey County Letter to TBM Council
2. Town of The Blue Mountains Letter of Support

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Smith  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

For more information, please contact:  
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## Report Approval Details

Document Title:	PBS.25.022 Response to Shared Path Indigenous Collaborative Hub Budget Request.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment-1-Grey-County-Letter-to-TBM-Council.pdf - Attachment-2-Town-of-The-Blue-Mountains-Letter-of-Support.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Mar 28, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Adam Smith - Mar 28, 2025 - 12:41 PM**