



FIRST VOICE
Urban Indigenous Coalition

MEDIA RELEASE

First Voice Community Action Plan Released to the Public

For immediate release:

Thursday, February 9, 2023

St. John's, NL - First Voice today released its Community Action Plan at a public event attended by elected officials, members of the urban Indigenous community, and the general public. Entitled *Our Shared Vision: A Path Toward Truth and Reconciliation in St. John's*, the Action Plan identifies 42 specific "Calls for Change".

"We are incredibly excited to share this work with all of you," said Stacey Howse, Executive Director of First Light, which is the Lead Partner in First Voice. "This ten-year vision will guide the coalition's work as we continue to collaborate with community and government partners to advance truth and reconciliation in our city and our province," she added. "The city, the province, and the country are talking about truth and reconciliation. This Plan now calls for action and sets clear and measurable goals," continued Howse. "We began this work more than three years ago and we're proud to share the final results with our community today."

Mayor Breen brought remarks on behalf of the City of St. John's, which has been a critical organizational Partner at the First Voice Partnership Table since the formation of the coalition. "Establishing a stronger relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples as stated in the Community Action Plan requires mutual understanding and respect," said Mayor Breen. "We will work with First Voice to acknowledge and embrace the diverse histories and cultures of the Indigenous Peoples of our province, to address the issues of affordable housing, expand cultural spaces, address systemic discrimination, and begin the process of decolonizing our policies and our programs."

Justin Campbell, First Light Director of Research and Strategic Partnerships, provided an overview of the Calls for Change. "Today we're calling on all residents of the City of St. John's and, indeed, all residents of the province to support our efforts," he said. "Read our Action

Plan. Think about what urban Indigenous people are asking of you. Consider where you can contribute. And then reach out to First Voice and get involved. It's time to get to work."

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First Voice is a coalition of Indigenous Peoples, service providers, and all levels of government working together to advance truth and reconciliation in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. First Light is a registered non-profit that has been serving both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in St. John's since 1983.