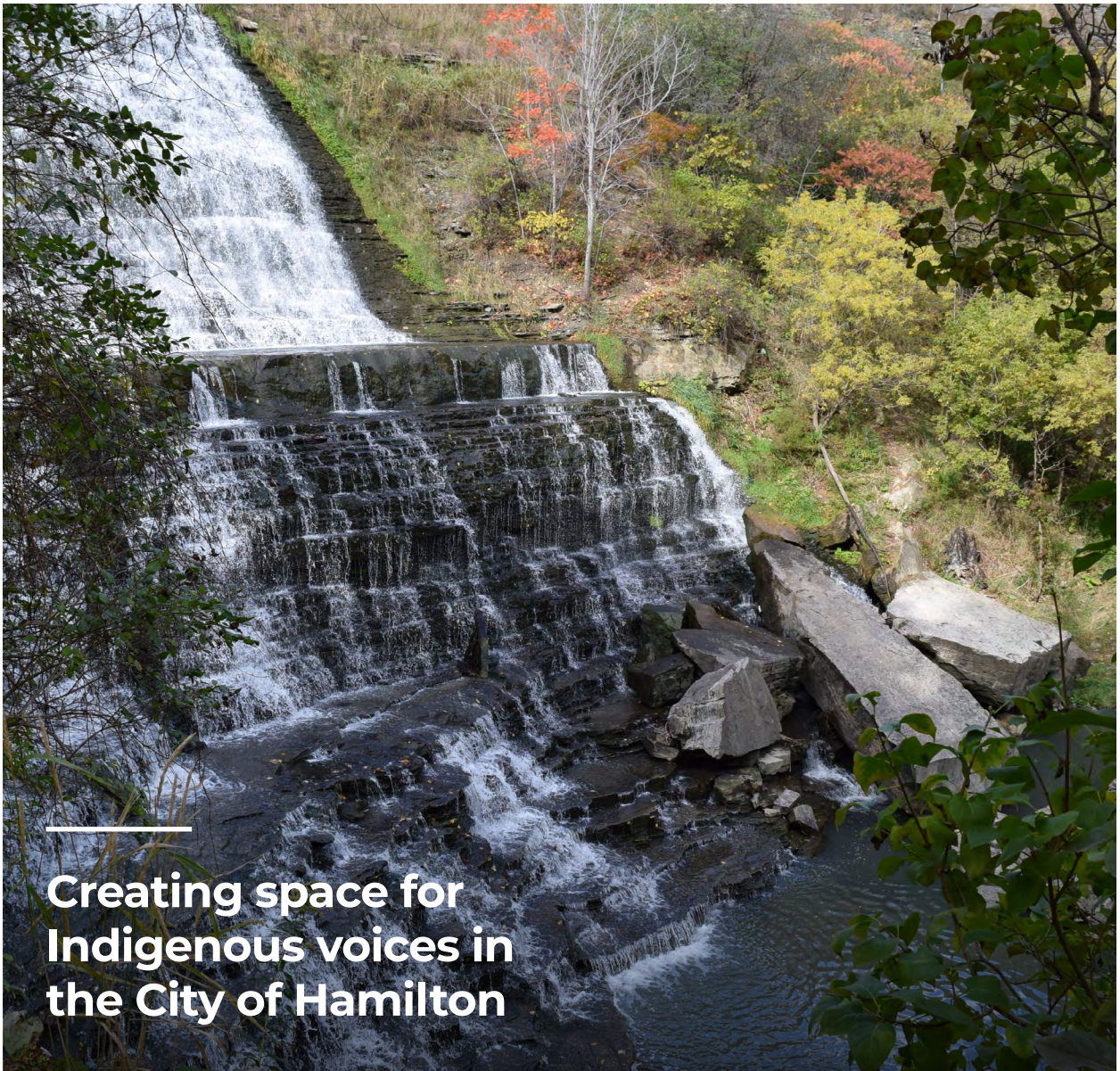




# Honouring Our Roots



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**Creating space for  
Indigenous voices in  
the City of Hamilton**

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## Acknowledgements

In the spirit of the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address<sup>1</sup>, we start with the words that come before all else by bringing greetings and thanks to the natural world. We acknowledge the interconnectedness of all life and our humble role as caretakers to respect our Earth Mother and all her beings. We bring greetings and thanks to the waters, the fish, the food plants, the medicine herbs, the animals, the trees, and birds. We show our utmost respect for the thunderers, the sun, Grandmother moon and the stars. We honour the enlightened teachers who came before us and thank Creator for bringing our minds together to do this good work.

To the Elders and Knowledge Keepers, the Urban Indigenous Community in Hamilton, neighbouring First Nations, and especially the Youth: you are seen and heard, and we honour the continuous retelling of your truth. We hope that this work will lead to places and spaces in Hamilton that reflect the beauty and strength of Indigenous peoples who have called this area home since time immemorial.

### We acknowledge those who are guiding this ongoing work, with special mention to:

- » The Urban Indigenous Community in and around Hamilton
- » Six Nations of the Grand River
- » Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- » Honouring Our Roots Circle of Experts
- » City of Hamilton Indigenous Landmarks and Monuments Working Group
- » Indigenous Relations Team, City of Hamilton
- » Senior Leadership Team, City of Hamilton

<sup>1</sup> See [APPENDIX B: Traditional Teachings](#)



Photo by S. Mazzikim on Unsplash



## Introduction

In July 2019, the City of Hamilton demonstrated reconciliation leadership when they endorsed the Urban Indigenous Strategy (UIS), guided by the principles of commitment, accountability, consultation, reciprocity, inclusion, recognition, commemoration and allyship. The purpose of the strategy is to strengthen relationships between the City and Indigenous community and to promote the truth about Indigenous histories, cultures, experiences, and contributions among all residents of Hamilton and beyond. It is now time to honour the Indigenous communities in and around Hamilton by putting these recommendations into action.

As part of the UIS implementation plan, a staff working group was created called the Indigenous Landmarks and Monuments Working Group (WG). With the help of First Peoples Group (FPG)—an Indigenous consulting firm that specializes in conversations around reconciliation—City staff invited Elders, historians, artists, and leaders from the Indigenous community to create a Circle of Experts (CoE).

### The CoE were invited to meet in Fall 2021 to:

1. *Review existing City owned landmarks, spaces, monuments, markers to identify ones that are of high priority to the Indigenous community in Hamilton that will be flagged for further review and in-depth community consultation*
2. *Co-develop a framework and process for reviewing existing city owned landmarks, spaces, monuments, markers as well as proposals for future installments with a lens of seeking to address systemic racism and the perpetuation of colonialism and in ways that respect and recognize Indigenous peoples, their histories and their contributions in the area.<sup>2</sup>*

This report will outline what we heard in the six meetings with the CoE and will **present a framework for moving forward** that is rooted in the **core themes** of: Connection to the Land; Relationships & Reciprocity; and Cultural Humility. The framework will include a **series of recommendations** supported by **traditional teachings and other tools and frameworks to consider** when designing the next phase of work.

### CORE THEMES



<sup>2</sup> From Project Charter



## Summary of Recommendations: A Collective and Shared Pathway

As an important starting point to this leg of Hamilton's reconciliation journey, the Circle of Experts shared stories and lived experiences, while reviewing city-owned landmarks, spaces, monuments, and markers. This collaboration resulted in the following six community-centred recommendations. Detailed recommendations can be found starting on [page 21](#).

In the spirit of truth-telling and deep-listening, and with respect for the Indigenous communities in and around Hamilton—past, present, and future—First Peoples Group recommends that that the City of Hamilton:

1. **Continue to foster long-term relationships with local First Nations and urban Indigenous communities that are based on mutual trust and respect.**
2. **Create and action a communications plan that includes interpretive signage at the high priority sites that indicates that the city is aware that these sites are problematic and educates the public about the need for further consultation and action.**
3. **Prioritize the building of Indigenous community gathering spaces, both indoors and outdoors.**
4. **Hire an Indigenous curatorial team composed of a Project Manager and a Curator. Recommended projects and initiatives within their portfolio include:**
  - A) Participate in the development of the city-wide Interpretive Master Plan to ensure that Indigenous perspectives are embedded and that there is a plan for sites of significant Indigenous cultural and historical importance to be commemorated.
  - B) Strengthen the presence of Indigenous Heritage on the [Hamilton Civic Museums website](#) by expanding the timeline to include Indigenous heritage.
  - C) Review and recommend changes to applicable policies to ensure that placemaking and public art processes are welcoming, accessible, and inclusive of Indigenous history and current realities.
  - D) Work with the Indigenous Relations Team to create a public education campaign to communicate why elevating Indigenous voices and histories is important, and what the process will be for Hamilton to take on this work.
  - E) Advance Indigenous place-making practices in urban centres by collaborating with the other municipalities on a gathering, interactive event or exhibit on this subject.



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**5. Hire an Indigenous Community Liaison to lead engagement with local First Nations and the urban Indigenous community in Hamilton. Recommended projects and initiatives within their portfolio include:**

- A) Support the Indigenous Relations Team with relationship-building initiatives that continue to grow connections between the City and the Indigenous communities in and around Hamilton.
  - B) Identify and implement ways to make City spaces and buildings welcoming and safe for Indigenous peoples and ensure they can see themselves reflected in the City's spaces and places.
  - C) Work with the Indigenous curatorial team to design and implement a community engagement plan that includes activities that are interactive, intergenerational, and inclusive.
  - D) Lead Indigenous engagement on the building of Indigenous community gathering space(s) in Hamilton.
  - E) Lead Indigenous engagement required to implement the plan to commemorate sites of significant cultural and historical importance to Indigenous peoples.
-



## Overview of the Engagement Process

To guide and inform the Historical Review, the Indigenous Landmarks Working Group formed the *Honouring Our Roots Circle of Experts*. A variety of individuals were invited to join the Circle of Experts (CoE) based on their expertise and interest; participants included Elders, historians, artists and leaders from the Indigenous community. The Circle's diverse background represented perspectives from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Haudenosaunee, Cree/Métis, and urban Indigenous people.

### The Circle of Experts included the following participants:

- » Angela DeMontigny
- » Carolyn King
- » Heather George
- » Keith Jamieson
- » Peter Schuler
- » Rick Hill

The CoE met for six virtual circles over a three-month period. Each virtual meeting was 1.5 hours long and included an opening circle, discussion, and a closing circle. At the first meeting, circle agreements were created that set the tone for the way the group would work together.

### Circle Agreements

- » **Be present**
- » **Listen with curiosity and compassion**
- » **Honour silence**
- » **Assume good intentions**
- » **Take what you need and offer what you can - be mindful of creating space for all to participate and share**

Draft recommendations were presented to the Working Group and the Circle of Experts in December 2021 and then members of the CoE were invited to participate in additional one-on-one meetings in January 2022 to validate the recommendations and provide additional feedback on the process and the plan for moving forward. Participants were offered an honourarium at the end of the engagement process.



## CHALLENGES

As result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all working group meetings were held online. While this format has its benefits, including being able to gather without having to worry about travel in winter, it also has its drawbacks. Our preference would have been to meet in person, in circle, and to workshop the content together over longer sessions.

It is also worth noting, as mentioned at several meetings, the difficulty of doing this kind of work within the colonial structures of a municipality that doesn't yet have deeply established or historically positive relationships with the Indigenous communities in and around the area.

This is a systemic issue that will require sweeping changes to governance that prioritize ongoing relationships that are respectful of Indigenous history, laws, rights, and responsibilities. The recommendations in this report are just a starting place, recognizing that much more work needs to be done to break down barriers to Indigenous participation in municipal activities and to change the way the system works from the inside out.

As consultants, it was difficult for us to get a sense of relationships and community dynamics in such a short period of time. Our recommendations for hiring a team of Indigenous staff to build relationships and to move these portfolios forward allows for long-term engagement and ever-evolving solutions to the challenged outlined.

The idea was brought up many times in the Circle and among the City of Hamilton Staff and consultants about what Hamilton could be. The City just celebrated its 175th anniversary and it has effectively 'grown up', but there is an unease about the values it has embraced at this time. Hamilton is known as the 'Hate Capital of Canada', an uncomfortable and unenviable designation. City staff do not want this designation and are working hard to develop [programming and policies](#)<sup>3</sup> that support deeper respect and support of Hamilton's true history.

There are the people who made history and the people who are affected by history. Colonial narratives tend to put people who make history up on pedestals to commemorate their achievements. There is nothing inherently wrong with this approach, but what happens when stories of cultural genocide are substantiated with new evidence? How do our policies and governments come to terms with these changes? How do we move forward - telling stories that are important to us, but bringing forward fuller and more nuanced historical narratives? The City of Hamilton has an opportunity to do just that. While the making and remembering of history is uncomfortable and involved, we owe it to our future generations to restore and present truths from all sides.

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3 <https://www.hamilton.ca/city-initiatives/priority-projects/hate-prevention-mitigation-initiative>





## What We Heard

### MEETING #1: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 28, 2021

#### INTRODUCTIONS, CIRCLE AGREEMENTS, ROLES & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the first meeting was to make introductions and to set the context for the Landmarks and Monuments Review. Peter Schuler from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, was offered tobacco (virtually) and asked to open and close the meeting in prayer. His Opening set the tone of the entire process by reminding everyone around the circle of the importance of putting mother earth and creation ahead of humans in all the work that we do. He suggested that any decisions made by the group consider how the land is impacted and how future generations will benefit from the work we are doing.

City staff presented the action items of the Urban Indigenous Strategy to give context to how the Landmarks Review had come to fruition. First Peoples Group shared a set of circle agreements that they use to guide community conversations. Each member of the Working Group and the Circle of Experts introduced themselves and where they were from and were invited to talk about what brought them to the circle, including their experience living and working in and around the Hamilton area.

**FPG presented four questions to frame the work that the group would be doing together over the coming weeks:**

1. **Who is the Indigenous community in and around Hamilton?**
2. **How should Indigenous Peoples be engaged about landmarks and monuments in Hamilton?**
3. **What is the process that needs to be followed for Indigenous voices and stories to be told and heard in full?**
4. **What does success look like?**

City staff introduced a spreadsheet of assets that included 289 landmarks, monuments and named spaces to sort and review. They explained that the spreadsheet was a work in progress and would be sorted by tags such as public art, historical plaques, park and street names and commemorated individuals by mid-year 2022. The CoE recommended starting with the most problematic sites on the list of commemorated individuals and asked that the City choose which ones they thought were the most problematic to present at the next meeting.

What we heard in this first meeting was the importance of the process being Indigenous led, that the entire list of assets be reviewed with an Indigenous lens, that time be taken to do a thorough review (but that some actions be taken sooner than later) and that public education throughout the process is crucial to the success of the project.

*"We need to keep on trying to teach, even if it takes forever. When we stop trying to teach, it is when they turn off the light, it gets dark and history disappears"*

*"...we keep doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. I want this to be a way...to educate as many people as possible to stop that cycle"*

*"[We are] here to help decolonize and eliminate falsehoods that were told about Indigenous and Canadian history"*

*"Telling the truth is what makes me interested in this project"*

The meeting ended by talking about processes for sharing resources and communicating in between meetings.



## MEETING #2: TUESDAY OCTOBER 13, 2021

### DISCUSSION: COMMEMORATED INDIVIDUALS

Upon recommendation from the Circle of Experts, the second meeting focused on commemorating individuals and more specifically the most problematic sites in terms of the lack of Indigenous history or the misrepresentation of true history at the site.

#### These included:

1. **The Sir John A MacDonald site (Where the statue has been removed, but the stone supporting structure, plinth, plaque and cannons remain).**
2. **The Queen Victoria statue**
3. **The Augustus Jones statue**
4. **Sites commemorating the United Empire Loyalists**

*"The biggest problem is that people do not know the real history. Most of these monuments perpetuate false history; how do we incorporate that much needed education into this process?"*

*"Most of the information out there is there to hide the real truth. We need to use words like genocide, national crimes... so that people truly understand the real history"*

#### High-level ideas that came out of this discussion of the most problematic sites include:

- » seek a system-wide solution (perhaps virtual) that acknowledges the missing Indigenous history at every site
- » create an interactive map of all the sites that educates the public on what they are and how they are related, but also acknowledges that what is presented isn't the whole story and layers missing Indigenous voices onto the stories already told
- » work with school boards to include and educate youth
- » create a Hamilton Indigenous History toolkit that could be shared
- » walking tours of any of these sites need to include Indigenous history / perspective
- » always be aware of the messages we give by using certain language (for example, statues are an "it" not a "he or she")
- » Any new signage or updating of plaques should be displayed also in Indigenous languages

*"It will be important to have these plaques and monuments have the right language and the right historical narrative where the role of Indigenous peoples and communities are highlighted"*



The Circle of Experts recommend that the following actions be taken at each of the highest priority sites that were discussed at this meeting:

#### Former site of Sir John A MacDonald Statue

- » do not relocate / reinstall the statue\*
- » remove remaining components of the SJAM statue, including the pedestal and cannons to be able to create space for reimagination of the site
- » have ceremony to cleanse the site
- » host a public design charette involving both Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of public to re-vision how the space could be used

#### Augustus Jones Statue

- » Even though this is a newer site compared to the others, and the Indigenous story is hinted at subtly, the narrative on the plaque is highly problematic and one sided
- » Suggestions to add to the narrative and possibly to the installation itself to honour the true history of Indigenous involvement in Jones' successes and family story

#### Queen Victoria Statue

- » remove mention of Queen Victoria having a mothering role over Canada and Indigenous peoples and/or explain clearly why this is problematic and how the narrative affected (and continues to affect) Indigenous peoples

#### United Empire Loyalists

- » The Indigenous history of this time period needs to be told.
- » The narrative of "the Loyalists came to Canada" is false. Canada was not yet a country.

\*While Sir John A Macdonald is the "hot-button" topic in Hamilton because of the way the statue was removed, it is important not to let this discussion over-shadow all the other important work that needs to be done. While relocation or reinterpretation of the Sir John A Macdonald site might have been a possibility had the statue been removed intentionally by the City, reinstallation of the statue now would be a step in the wrong direction. Clearing the site (placing all remaining components in storage indefinitely), would allow for future community engagement to happen in a good way.

Again, during the closing circle, it was noted that to create systemic change when it comes to Indigenous relations, it is imperative not just to focus on correcting commemorations at pre-existing landmarks and monuments but to widen the scope and to deepen perspective, making the land and the interconnection of all things more of a priority than elevating over the accomplishments of humans.

The CoE experts did not want statues or monuments of Indigenous warriors or elders added to the City catalogue.

The group shared at length about how Indigenous people do not create monuments to people, but rather commemorate and connect to nature:

***"We've got monuments to corn, beans and squash in our own backyard"***



### MEETING #3: TUESDAY OCTOBER 26, 2021

#### DISCUSSION: WHAT IS NEEDED FOR A MEANINGFUL, CULTURALLY SAFE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS IN 2022?

The third meeting started off with the introduction of Keith Jamieson, a new member to the Circle of Experts. City staff then took time to review the landmarks and monuments list, which had since been updated with more detail added by the Heritage Resource Management team. Staff explained the organization of the spreadsheet and the CoE was invited to access the spreadsheet on the shared drive and to review the monuments and landmarks on the list.

FPG then presented a "What We Are Hearing" report to sum up ideas and topics that came from the first two meetings.

#### Themes included:

- » **Process**
- » **Importance of historical accuracy**
- » **Language; and**
- » **Prioritizing the assets list**

Members of the Circle requested that the *theme of land and interconnectedness be added to the list as it should come first as a priority and be woven through all themes and report recommendations.*

#### Comments and ideas that came from the group discussion included:

- » Prioritize discussion about who was here and what was taking place up to 11,000 years before the City of Hamilton was established.
- » Use Wampum belt teachings, Dish with One Spoon and original treaties to teach about the true history of the area
- » Restore this history so that everyone understands how they came to be here, whether they are Indigenous or not
- » Be intentional about creating educational curriculum / materials / presentations to Hamilton schools
- » Prioritize the environment
- » Create a timeline that includes our history and the fact that we are still here and thriving
- » "Housing as monuments": see [www.aboriginalmothercentre.ca](http://www.aboriginalmothercentre.ca) as an example

*"How is the Great Law acknowledged? This Great Law really represents the traditional way of living. As long as our ways of doing things are not included, recognized and respected, we won't be able to go anywhere. How do we make that happen? How do we get the same respect as any other church or religion in this country?"*

*"Monuments are a one-time action. We are looking to the City for long term commitment to create commemorations and monuments which are environmentally sustainable, decolonized, unapologetically reclaiming Indigenous knowledge and historically accurate"*



## MEETING #4: TUESDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2021

### DISCUSSION: WHO TO INVOLVE IN CONSULTATION AND HOW?

The fourth circle centred around the question of how to move forward in 2022, especially concerning inviting (or responding to invitations from) the right people to discuss and make decisions about monuments and landmarks, as well as how to create meaningful consultation processes that are culturally safe for all involved.

#### Discussion: What is needed for a meaningful, culturally safe engagement process in 2022?

- » Healthy conversation where you are not afraid to discuss difficult topics, in a friendly manner, and you can come to consensus
- » Spaces and conversations that are calm and constructive
- » Look at what has already been done, past surveys and initiatives and the hundreds of letters sent in to support the taking down of the SJAM statue before consulting again
- » “No need to reinvent the canoe” If we look at the other cities and what they have done, we can base our processes and initiatives on theirs to create new spaces within Hamilton.
- » Engage Indigenous youth in the process moving forward as this is a major teaching opportunity and a way to get them involved in the process of decolonizing the future
- » Create safe and welcoming spaces for Indigenous community for gatherings such as Urban Pow Wow, ceremony, education...
- » Prioritize land for ceremony
- » Support must be provided for people to work through the anger and the hurt, especially in spaces where they are being asked to speak about their trauma
- » Prioritize Indigenous art projects and murals
- » Prioritize educating the public about the true history of Canada.

*“When people begin to see the true history of Canada and what was continuously done here, people want to act. Let’s give them the tools to do so...”*

#### Discussion: Who to involve in consultation and how?

FPG presented a chart of Indigenous groups, organizations, departments, and individual contacts in Hamilton and the CoE agreed that everyone should be invited to participate in engagement efforts when it comes to altering / revisioning spaces to include Indigenous voices and/or when envisioning new Indigenous spaces or commemorations. They focused their discussion on the “how”, sharing ideas for what future community engagement and what future projects could entail.

- » Involve the educational institutions, especially those with Indigenous departments and programs. There are so many talented Indigenous academics in Hamilton.
- » Don’t expect Indigenous community to commemorate individuals. Talk to key organizations about what Indigenous people in Hamilton need and want.
- » Use the expertise of this group to start with priority landmarks and then the process for next steps will follow.
- » Start by choosing one priority site and do a design charrette on that one location. Invite representatives from all of Indigenous organizations to bring in multiple perspectives and languages.
- » Think about how technology / virtual space can be used, not just because of Covid but because it is the new reality and can connect people from many different places at once.
- » Explore options for augmented reality (not just a 2D map). A virtual reality journey through time.



## MEETING #5: TUESDAY NOVEMBER 23, 2021

### DISCUSSION: IDEAS FOR ADDRESSING THE MOST PROBLEMATIC SITES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE SITES FOR INDIGENOUS COMMEMORATIONS AND/OR GATHERING SPACES

At the fifth meeting, City Staff started off by presenting two projects already in progress that could be helpful tools to support the recommendations that will come out of this process.

The first was an interactive GIS map of Hamilton and surrounding area that had the majority of the landmarks and monuments listed in the assets spreadsheet shared with the group in meetings 1 and 3. The group was asked to imagine the possibilities of turning the map into a "Story Map" or virtual space to tell multiple narratives of each site. It could also be used to map areas of the city that are traditionally significant to Indigenous communities.

The second project was the Hamilton Civic Museums' new website that will soon be launched and will be open to public submissions to enhance the timeline. City staff will give priority access to this group so that the Indigenous history is well represented.

Discussion on the potential of these virtual mapping and timeline projects was rich and respectful, with circle members agreeing that the virtual tools and projects are a great way to tell multiple narratives at once. The discussion did also cover the topic of monument removal, which, similar to public discussion, resulted in a wide variety of opinions and ideas.

#### Discussion on "Mapping Change":

- » The group liked the idea of virtual spaces to show the big picture and to add multiple voices to multiple sites and landmarks

- » It's important to keep some of the problematic monuments up while correcting falsehoods and changing the narrative where needed
- » Take down the statues and replace them with gardens and trees, especially memorial gardens for Indigenous children
- » The virtual space allows us to engage in a broad discussion with multiple communities
- » Consider how to hold space for the education of people who stopped learning about history in grade 10
- » City has an opportunity through these virtual tools and in person at the sites to address the problematic nature of one-sided history and an invitation for this to be a regional conversation
- » This is so much more than just a project. Large-scale systemic change needs to happen.
- » Ryerson needs to be added to "top 5" most problematic sites. The recreation centre named after him should get a new name.<sup>4</sup>

*"They do represent something, just not what they are made out to represent"*

*"We need to be very careful not to destroy something that has tremendous educational potential"*

*"When you realize that education is made to build patriotism, the real history often gets lost"*

*"We need to talk more about the natural history and the spirit of the land. We must talk about the rocks, the animals, the rivers... we need to celebrate what's under the pavement"*

*"One of the hardest things to manage here is that there is no One Truth. Even within the Indigenous community"*

<sup>4</sup> At the time of the writing of this report, a process has already started for renaming the Ryerson Community Centre



The second presentation and discussion were around the idea from previous meetings about creating an Indigenous gathering space (or spaces) in Hamilton. FPG presented visuals of other spaces that were Indigenous-led and/or Indigenous-designed spaces for community to gather and asked the group to imagine if a gathering space were to be built in Hamilton, are there areas that have strong cultural or spiritual significance that should be considered?

- » Significant sites / gathering places would have always been where the natural resources were richest - waters and forests
- » This is where research would need to be done. Where are the old growth forests?
- » Have ceremony for the trees that have survived
- » What can we do to repair and revive land that is under pavement?
- » Hamilton has a responsibility to honour and protect its natural sites
- » Government needs to commit to protecting water, land and trees
- » Consider sites where there are already Indigenous art projects underway: 'Eagles Among Us' in Battlefield Park and 'All Our Relations' at West Harbour James Street Plaza

#### MEETING #6:

**TUESDAY DECEMBER 4, 2021**

#### DISCUSSION: RECOMMENDATIONS REVIEW

In the final Circle of Experts gathering of 2021, FPG presented draft report recommendations that were based on the discussions of the last five meetings.

#### Comments and ideas from Circle of Experts:

- » The recommendations are good; when considering land though, also consider the development and real estate industries
- » Bring focus back to "What is Hamilton's Indigenous story? What happened here? Who were the people?"

- » Prioritize the hiring of an Indigenous historian / more Indigenous staff at City of Hamilton
- » Develop a website and tangible virtual tools that link to maps and QR codes on the ground
- » Signs and plaques at minimum for sites of Indigenous historical significance
- » Don't forget about contemporary Indigenous stories as well
- » Public art process should be stronger and more welcoming/accessible to Indigenous artists.

*"The governments aren't going to change anything because there is nobody calling for it. You must have the people change things, and the only way to do that is to educate them. We have been brainwashed to ignore the rest of creation. Education is key."*

#### ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS: JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2022 VALIDATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Once recommendations were drafted, FPG invited each member of the Circle of Experts to provide additional feedback on the engagement process and the draft recommendations. We also had conversations with staff to gain a better understanding of how these recommendations could be implemented.

The Honouring Our Roots framework and process for moving forward that follows is a culmination of what was heard at the meetings with the Circle of Experts. We hope that they see their voices in the recommendations below, and that the City continues the forward momentum brought forth by this engagement work.



# Honouring Our Roots Framework and Process for Moving Forward







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## THIS IS NOT A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT<sup>5</sup>

by Heather George

This is not a land acknowledgment.

What is there to acknowledge  
What once was ours to care for is now yours to benefit from  
Corporations become the colonizers through resource extraction  
Retirement funds are invested in resource extraction  
We are taught wealth is in money  
It's a cycle and we have become complacent.

This is not a land acknowledgement.

But we've consulted you say  
How can you consult the coming faces?  
How can you consult the waters?  
How can you consult the plants, animals, birds?  
Have you spoken to the winds?  
Did you call out to the sun, moons and stars?  
Did you sit in silence with all beings?

This is not a land acknowledgment.

This is an acknowledgement of systemic racism  
This is an acknowledgement of privilege built on colonization  
This is an acknowledgement of a broken relationship  
This is a call to rebuild your relationship to the Earth Mother  
This is a reminder of the coming faces.

This is not a land acknowledgment.

This is an acknowledgment of the work that needs to be done.

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<sup>5</sup> George, Heather. Published in Collections: A journal for Museum and Archives Professionals 2022, Vol. 18 (1) 3-4. Used with permission of the author.



## Core Themes

In the Fall of 2021, the *Honouring Our Roots Circle of Experts* (CoE) was formed as part of the Indigenous Landmarks and Monuments Working Group (WG) to review a list of City owned landmarks, spaces, monuments, and markers. They were asked to identify sites that are high priority to the Indigenous community for potential removal or recontextualization. While high priority sites were discussed, and many ideas were shared for moving forward in a good way, concerns and comments were raised at every meeting that speak to the systemic transformation that needs to occur to foster right relations with Indigenous peoples and with the land that the municipality occupies. These thoughts and ideas are summarized below as core themes of the Honouring Our Roots Framework.

### 1. CONNECTION TO LAND

In the opening and closing prayers at each of the CoE meetings, Peter Schuler grounded the group in traditional teachings, reminding us of the importance of the “morals and values that kept us alive for thousands of years”. In his prayers, he recognized the interconnectedness of all the elements, the land, animals, and plant life on earth, only mentioning humans at the very end. He warned against the irreparable harm that has been done to the earth since people forgot their natural place in the circle.

This distinct way of framing human responsibilities puts the land and consideration for its wellbeing ahead of the human desire for more accumulation wealth at the expense of health of the earth and all its inhabitants.

*“What needs to happen before we realize that putting a man on a stick isn’t the way to learn about history”*

In discussing the reasons why monuments and commemorations exist in the first place, one participant noted that they often merely serve political functions to reinforce the narratives of the dominant culture. The functions and intentions of monuments, and especially statues of commemorated individuals should be examined and exposed as the work to recontextualize these sites moves forward.

Members of the CoE reiterated and asked to be heard when speaking about the importance of not only considering but centering the land and its gifts in all municipal decisions. This holistic approach requires authenticity, humility, and great respect.

Ideas that emphasize that connection to land included the re-naturalization of sites where statues or monuments once stood, creating community gardens, growing traditional medicines, expanding, and taking care of the tree canopy, connecting Indigenous teachings to trails and other natural attractions in the area. One participant suggested that a “Nature as Monuments” strategy be created to house some of this important work.

Finally, this theme invokes the Haudenosaunee philosophy of the Seventh Generations Principle which reminds us to think about the world our descendants will inherit--that the decisions we make today should lead to a sustainable world for at least the next seven generations to come.

*“History is not about buildings and monuments, it’s about the destruction of Turtle Island”*



## 2. RELATIONSHIPS AND RECIPROCITY

Authentic long-term relationships built on respect and reciprocity are essential for this cultural heritage work to move forward in a good way. Engagement should demonstrate deep care for all who are invited to the table and must be designed to ensure past and existing wrongs are not perpetuated or reproduced. Where possible, community engagement should support capacity development, with Indigenous partners co-designing and taking on leadership roles within the engagement work.

In 2021, the University of Manitoba published a [framework for Indigenous community engagement](#) that offers seven principles for building healthy relationships with Indigenous communities that includes cultural literacy and self-reflection, relationship and reciprocity, following nation- and community-specific protocols and puts emphasis on the importance of humility and mutually-beneficial collaboration.

The City of Hamilton is encouraged to follow these same principals when working with Indigenous Nations and urban communities.

Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy and UIS Implementation Plan also outlines these values, not just in community engagement, but in co-creating a City where Indigenous peoples feel respected and see their culture reflected in physical spaces and through services provided by the City.

Working to implement the Urban Indigenous Strategy and the recommendations outlined in this report will require connection and relationship with the Hamilton Indigenous community. Acknowledging again the challenge of doing this work within a colonial system, movement forward will require a whole new way of engagement and collaboration. We recognize that this can be paralyzing for staff who are not used to engaging in this way. We suggest that City staff use the following questions to guide their interaction.

**Table 1: Guiding Questions to Support Indigenous Relationship-Building in Hamilton**

Level	Principle	Question	How?
Individual	Trauma-informed workplace: It is not the responsibility of Indigenous people to continuously educate settlers about history, both traumatizing or not.	Am I ready to work with Indigenous people?  Has this project meaningfully engaged the people who will be most affected by the initiative?	Self-awareness check-in: How have I benefited from colonialism?  Do I have the basic information to engage in this topic? If not, where can I access this learning?  What cultural competency training is available to me through work?
Workplace/ Department	Nothing about us, without us	Have I made an effort to learn about Indigenous perspectives [with regards to this project] ahead of time?  Does this work connect with the Urban Indigenous Strategy? If not, are there any strategic points of connection?	Map out the project and who will be most affected: Urban Indigenous, treaty territory representatives, Indigenous youth, etc. Think about what 'meaningfully engaging' means in this context. Reach out to contacts.
Community	"100 cups of tea": Indigenous connections are based on relationships built over time.	Am I building a relationship or checking a box?	-Map out the Indigenous people already in my network. How can I grow this in an authentic way?  -Attend Indigenous community events as a member of the public. Ask how you can be a helper.



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### 3. CULTURAL HUMILITY

Cultural humility requires taking the time for critical self-reflection and for listening to and learning from others. Cultural awareness and cultural safety training are crucial to increase City staff and Council's knowledge of Indigenous cultures, traditions, and worldviews. Educational opportunities, learning events, and training programs are all initiatives that should be implemented through the Urban Indigenous Strategy.

Following the lead of municipalities such as Toronto and Saskatoon, cultural competency training should be mandatory across the corporation and adopted as part of the onboarding process for all new staff. City Council and upper management should receive custom in-person experiential training at least once in each new election term.

When the Circle of Experts talked about ways to create spaces in Hamilton for Indigenous voices to be heard, they cautioned against taking a pan-Indigenous approach, instead distinguishing between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit urban experiences and the distinctions between different First Nations from the area.

Having cultural humility also means taking a strengths-based approach to working with community, recognizing Indigenous peoples as experts of their own experiences. Instead of a partnership where Indigenous people are seen as "stakeholders" who feed into a consultation process, the City should partner in a way where Indigenous peoples can take the lead, and the City supports the vision and goals of the community or communities.



## Recommendations for moving forward

### 1. Continue to foster long-term relationships with local First Nations and urban Indigenous communities (organizations, educational institutions, artists, and individuals) that are based on mutual trust and respect.

Meaningful engagement and relationship building will take time and focus but is necessary for positive outcomes. **A further engagement plan is recommended** as each Indigenous community is different and requires a deeper synergy of cultural understanding for relationships of mutual benefits.

The Urban Indigenous Strategy outlined several actions for the City of Hamilton to take including to "Improve meaningful consultation with urban Indigenous residents and First Nations communities on municipal projects, plans and approvals". We know that both Council and City staff are aware of the gravity and importance of this task, and we acknowledge that it is not easy work. To improve in this area, we recommend a coordinated approach by all departments to commit to making Indigenous Relations a top priority.

- » Use Table 1: Guiding Questions to Support Indigenous Relationship-Building in Hamilton in all project plans and should be made available to all City employees and elected officials when setting out to work with Indigenous communities or individuals.
- » A guiding resource that we can recommend to learn about how to effectively engage Indigenous community is [Working in good ways: a framework and resources](#), published by the University of Manitoba.
- » The Federation of Canadian Municipalities [Stronger Together Toolkit](#) is another helpful resource that speaks directly to community economic development and could help bridge relationships on specific projects.

- » [Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples](#) by Bob Joseph & Cynthia F. Joseph should be required reading for staff.
- » [Engaging and Empowering Aboriginal Youth](#) is a toolkit for service providers that outlines ways to involve and elevate Indigenous youth voices.

### 2. Create and action a communications plan that includes interpretive signage at the high priority sites [Sir John A Macdonald monument site, Queen Victoria monument, Augustus Jones monument, and United Empire Loyalist monuments] that indicates that the City is aware that these sites are problematic and educates the public about the need for further consultation and action.

This action can be taken immediately and doesn't require further consultation or to wait for a more comprehensive workplan to be designed. Installing signage at the high-priority sites that were reviewed by the CoE demonstrates *respect and humility*<sup>6</sup> on the part of the City towards Indigenous communities and members of the public who are calling for more diverse narratives to be told through commemoration and interpretation. The signage should indicate that the City is aware that certain monuments, commemorations and historical interpretations are problematic and that the City is aware, and starting the process of engaging with Indigenous communities to ensure that the work moves forward in a good way.

### 3. Prioritize the building of Indigenous community gathering spaces, both indoors and outdoors.

In the Urban Indigenous Strategy report, Action 14 calls for the establishment of "an Indigenous Cultural Centre that offers interpretive programming, provides a gathering space for Indigenous peoples to practice their ceremonies and hold cultural events". We are reinforcing

6 Respect and Humility are two of the Seven Grandfather teachings. See [APPENDIX B](#) for details.



this action as a recommendation here. These conversations about monuments and commemorations could not be held without hearing about the need for Indigenous peoples to feel a sense of belonging on their own land. Whether talking about Indigenous historical places that should be honoured, or new opportunities for Indigenous public art or commemorative space, the question of whether community could also use that space to gather and do ceremony was always top of mind. Several ideas for both indoor and outdoor gathering spaces were discussed, including at the site of the All Our Relations public art piece; at Battlefield Park; or anywhere along the lake.

For more information on the importance of urban Indigenous spaces, please see [APPENDIX C](#).

**4. Hire an Indigenous curatorial team composed of a Project Manager and a Curator. These positions would be housed in the Heritage Resource Management Section of the Tourism and Culture division and would be part of a cross-departmental work group that works closely with the Indigenous Relations Team, the Placemaking Public Art and Projects section, and Landscape Architectural Services. Recommended projects and initiatives within their portfolio include:**

**A Participate in the development of the city-wide Interpretive Master Plan to ensure that Indigenous perspectives are embedded and that there is a plan for sites of significant Indigenous cultural and historical importance to be commemorated.**

Noting existing frameworks and best practices such as [Parks Canada's Framework for History and Commemoration](#)<sup>7</sup>, a city-wide Interpretive Master Plan needs to be developed from a place of integrity and inclusion, ensuring the Indigenous histories and perspectives are central to all work going forward. This links to the deliverable in the

UIS Implementation plan to "Incorporate more Indigenous stories and voices into the City of Hamilton's culture and heritage plans".

While an extensive list of landmarks, spaces, monuments, and markers was reviewed by the CoE during this process, the next step is to gather information from many different sources about the Indigenous history of the area. This could include published histories that already exist through local First Nations and at educational institutions but could also be an opportunity for a wide-scale storytelling project that invites the Indigenous community to crowd-source the history of the area from political, cultural, social, and environmental perspectives. This project has the potential to lend itself to creative community engagement opportunities and long-term virtual projects that tell the true history of Hamilton from many perspectives. It could also serve to identify sites of significant cultural and historical importance to Indigenous peoples and/or to aid the decision-making process for the location of an Indigenous community gathering space.

Within this work, there are several war monuments and interpretive sites in Hamilton that teach Canadian and British military history but don't speak to Indigenous involvement in or contributions to war efforts or the way that these conflicts would have affected First Nations and Métis communities. This important piece of the story could be added by reinterpreting plaques and signage or by adding new interpretive components to existing memorials. There is also great potential for Battlefield Park to become a gathering space for Indigenous community to gather and host events.

Lastly, this recommendation would lead to the fulfillment of the UIS action to "Ensure that Indigenous stories and local Indigenous history are included in official archives across Hamilton".

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/plan/cadre-framework>



**B) Strengthen the presence of Indigenous Heritage on the [Hamilton Civic Museums website](#) by expanding the timeline to include Indigenous heritage and indicate that Indigenous Peoples inhabited the area for thousands of years before the City's founding.**

There is great potential for adding and expanding the presence of Indigenous history and current realities on the Hamilton Civic Museums website. This could include but is not limited to the expansion of the timeline of the Hamilton 175 website to include historical context of the land and people who lived in the area prior to Hamilton becoming a city; the development of an interactive digital map-based interpretation of Indigenous names, places, history, and stories; or other visual project connected to the Indigenous History audit to be completed by the Indigenous curatorial team.

**C) Review and recommend changes to applicable policies to ensure that placemaking and public art processes are welcoming, accessible, and inclusive of Indigenous history and current realities.**

While lots of work has already taken place to foster positive relationships between Indigenous artists and the City, this recommendation will ensure that opportunities for public art by Indigenous artists are embedded in the next Public Art Master plan. This recommendation also links to the deliverable with the UIS Implementation Plan to "Identify or create ways to support Indigenous artists" and will hopefully lead to the intention to "Commission public art in a prominent location that honours mutual respect and the spirit of reconciliation".

**D) Work with the Indigenous Relations Team to create a public education campaign to communicate why elevating Indigenous voices and histories is important, and what the process will be for Hamilton to take on this work.**

While the Indigenous Community Liaison (see recommendation #6) is engaging with the Indigenous community on how to move forward in a good way on issues placemaking and interpretation, the Indigenous curatorial team will need a plan to engage the public in an education campaign to explain why amplifying Indigenous voices on these topics is so important. The CoE came up with many ideas to engage the public including learning circles, Indigenous walking tours, cross-cultural sharing and a [Monument Lab](#)-type event that brings together diverse voices.

Education and awareness should start internally with the staff team, and all departments should be encouraged to participate in these educational opportunities.

**E) Advance Indigenous place-making practices in urban centres by collaborating with the City of Toronto (and/or other municipalities) on a gathering, interactive event or exhibit on this subject.**

Monuments and commemorations around the world are being scrutinized to identify "problematic" historical figures who contributed to discrimination and oppression, often through colonial practices. Many municipalities in Canada are in the process of reviewing their inventory of city-owned public art, monuments, and the origins of the meanings behind street, park and building names. The City of Toronto is currently undergoing a process to rename a major roadway and are taking advantage of the opportunity to do a wider review of their inventory of assets and commemorations. Collaboration with the City of Toronto and/or other municipalities is recommended with many exciting opportunities for events or exhibits that are centred around Indigenous participation and the Indigenous experience of places and spaces.



**5. Hire an Indigenous Community Liaison to lead engagement with local First Nations and the urban Indigenous community in Hamilton. This position would be housed in the Indigenous Relations Team of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department and would work closely with other sections, especially the Heritage Resource Management curatorial team. Recommended projects and initiatives within their portfolio include:**

- A) Support the Indigenous Relations Team with relationship-building initiatives that continue to grow connections between the City and the Indigenous communities in and around Hamilton.**
- B) Identify and implement ways to make City spaces and buildings welcoming and safe for Indigenous peoples and ensure they can see themselves reflected in the City's spaces and places.**
- C) Work with the Indigenous curatorial team to design and implement a community engagement plan that includes activities that are interactive, intergenerational, and inclusive.**
- D) Lead Indigenous engagement on the building of Indigenous community gathering space(s) in Hamilton.**
- E) Lead Indigenous engagement required to implement the plan to commemorate sites of significant cultural and historical importance to Indigenous peoples.**

The Indigenous Community Liaison position will be the main point of contact for First Nations and the urban Indigenous community to engage in topics of heritage, culture, and movement forward on the issues listed throughout this report. The posting for this job should prioritize Indigenous applicants and the position itself should be partnered with a

“municipal champion” who can help the successful candidate navigate the establishment of this new role within the bureaucratic system it resides in.

A significant portion of the first year of this new role will be needed to get to know community dynamics both between the City and local First Nations, but also between urban Indigenous organizations, programs, projects, educational institutions, artists, Elders and youth. Time should be spent to establish relationships before an invitation goes out to partner or engage on a specific initiative. This can be accomplished by hosting small community gatherings, meeting with individuals one-on-one, and attending as many community-based events as possible. This could involve putting in volunteer hours as a helper or attending ceremonies, and these extra activities should be recognized and compensated appropriately by the City. The position will require flexibility that may not be available to other employees.

Once relationships are established and moving in a positive direction, a community engagement strategy can be implemented that invites Indigenous residents and visitors to participate in the retelling of history and revisioning of monuments and Indigenous place making from their unique perspectives. The CoE discussed many creative ideas for engagement including but not limited to design charettes, community mapping, PhotoVoice projects and special events.

These various engagement activities should incorporate Indigenous methodologies for hosting engagements and conversations – honouring local protocols, centering Indigenous wisdom, and using trauma informed design and facilitations, while recognizing that the Indigenous population in Hamilton is also very diverse.

This new position, along with the hiring of an Indigenous curator and Project Manager to lead the research and development of final deliverables are vital for all these recommendations to move forward in a good way.





## Teachings and frameworks to apply to this work

To answer the question *why* this work is important, we need look no further than the Urban Indigenous Strategy and Urban Indigenous Strategy Implementation Plan, where need for action is clearly laid out and answered by multiple Indigenous contributors. These documents show that significant foundations for this work have already been established in the community and at the City of Hamilton. The *how* and *what* are now the outstanding pieces that have been articulated in the recommendations and core themes above.

The UIS is guided by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice. It lays out a clear pathway for the City of Hamilton to engage with Indigenous Urban peoples. Further refinement and prioritization were made in the UIS Implementation Plan (2021) with priority areas further identified and the appropriate working groups detailed and assigned.

The Civic Museum Strategy which was adopted by City Council in November 2021 further supports these areas. The Strategy demonstrates how museums are changing and are being called to change their place in public life and places and better represent the histories of all peoples and offer curation, story-telling, and spaces beyond their traditional role. There are several sites which are highlighted below which could connect and intersect with the Urban Indigenous Strategy for a deeper connection to Hamilton's land, archaeology and history.

*Alignment between the recommendations in this framework that the internal documents that already exist can be found in the chart in [APPENDIX A](#).*

**Beyond these high-level Indigenous frameworks and internal guiding documents that already exist, we have referenced other frameworks and resources within this report, including the [Parks Canada Framework for History and Commemoration](#) which outlines the following key practices that should also be applied to this work:**

1. **Craft big stories**
2. **Address conflict and controversy**
3. **Seek opportunities for Indigenous peoples to share and communicate their history, on their own terms**
4. **Realize that history is written from a worldview**
5. **Share authority**
6. **Emphasize a full range of voices, perspectives, and experiences**
7. **Acknowledge that humans have touched all heritage places, including parks and natural areas**
8. **Recognize that power dynamic affect understandings of heritage places**
9. **Explore the spectrum of powerful memories and meaning attached to heritage places**
10. **Appreciate that interpretations of the past are constantly evolving**



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Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we encourage staff and City Council to seek out traditional Indigenous teachings to truly understand the root of what is needed to move forward with this work. Teachings that could be used as frameworks for designing next steps include the [Seven Grandfathers Teaching](#), the [Seven Generations Principal](#), the [Two-Row Wampum](#) and [Dish with One Spoon Treaty](#) [see APPENDIX B].

These teachings call upon current policymakers to speak the truth and to uphold their responsibilities as treaty peoples and good neighbours. The truth is now undisputable through the TRC findings, the MMIW reports and the rediscovery of undocumented remains of thousands of children at residential school sites since May 2021. This truth is unpleasant for settlers. It is traumatizing for Indigenous peoples who are reliving these painful experiences. The question remains as to how this new truth will find its way into historical narratives in the places where history was made.

Applying the Seven Generations Principle to this work will help to prioritize the health of the land we live on and the earth we share as we think history that we are currently living and making and the world we are leaving for our descendants. There is a responsibility of current decision-makers and public servants to develop a better relationship with Indigenous peoples, respect treaty rights and ensure that in seven generations, the relationship between Indigenous peoples and all Canadians is prosperous and respectful. What better gift to its people could be a dedicated, thoughtful rethinking of the future.



## APPENDIX A

### ALIGNMENT AROUND RECOMMENDATIONS: CIRCLE OF EXPERTS, URBAN INDIGENOUS STRATEGY, AND CIVIC MUSEUM STRATEGY

Circle of Experts	UIS and UIS Implementation Plan	Civic Museum Strategy
<p>2. Remove all remaining components of the Sir John A MacDonald statue from their current location in Gore Park.</p> <p>3. Create and action a communications plan that includes interpretive signage at the high priority sites that indicates that the city is aware that these sites are problematic and educates the public about the need for further consultation and action.</p>	<p>18 Ensure that Indigenous stories and local Indigenous history are included in official archives across Hamilton.</p>	<p>"Battlefield Park and the 1876 Gage house occupy land traditionally used by Indigenous peoples. "has a declared connection to Indigenous peoples and strong public art piece done by an Indigenous artist.</p>
<p>5. Hire an Indigenous curatorial team composed of a Project Manager and a Curator. Recommended projects and initiatives within their portfolio include:</p> <p>A) Participate in the development of the city-wide Interpretive Master Plan to ensure that Indigenous perspectives are embedded and that there is a plan for sites of significant Indigenous cultural and historical importance to be commemorated.</p> <p>B) Strengthen the presence of Indigenous Heritage on the <a href="#">Hamilton Civic Museums</a> website by expanding the timeline to include Indigenous heritage.</p> <p>C) Review and recommend changes to applicable policies to ensure that placemaking and public art processes are welcoming, accessible, and inclusive of Indigenous history and current realities.</p> <p>D) Work with the Indigenous Relations Team to create a public education campaign to communicate why elevating Indigenous voices and histories is important, and what the process will be for Hamilton to take on this work.</p> <p>E) Advance Indigenous place-making practices in urban centres by collaborating with the other municipalities on a gathering, interactive event or exhibit on this subject.</p>	<p>-Indigenous cultures and traditions need to be respected and seen as more than a performance.</p> <p>-Indigenous stories and languages need to be seen as part of Hamilton's heritage.</p> <p>From UISIP:</p> <p>#11: Incorporate more Indigenous stories and voices into the City of Hamilton's culture and heritage plans.</p> <p>#12: Use markers and signs to restore Indigenous names and identify significant Indigenous landmarks in Hamilton. This could include street names, trails, and parks.</p> <p>#18: Ensure that Indigenous stories and local Indigenous history are included in official archives across Hamilton.</p> <p>#19: Continue to improve how the City works with First Nations when conducting archaeology. This will include identifying how to educate the public on the rich archaeological history in Hamilton.</p> <p>Use markers and signs to restore Indigenous names and identify significant Indigenous landmarks in Hamilton. This could include street names, trails and parks.</p> <p>Continue to improve how the City works with First Nations when conducting archaeology. This will include identifying how to educate the public on the rich archaeological history in Hamilton.</p>	<p>Hamilton Museum Vision: "The Hamilton Civic Museums will become museums of, by and for the city rather than just museums which are operated by the City. To do this they will preserve and present the many untold stories of Hamilton and Hamiltonians in a sustainable, accessible, inclusive and engaging manner.</p> <p>The city itself, including its peoples, streetscapes, parks, theatres, neighborhoods, buildings and public spaces, will be treated as a museum that embodies its collective history. The Hamilton Civic Museums will become equal parts physical, mobile and virtual"</p>



Circle of Experts	UIS and UIS Implementation Plan	Civic Museum Strategy
<p>1. Continue to foster long-term relationships with local First Nations and urban Indigenous communities that are based on mutual trust and respect.</p> <p>4. Prioritize the building of Indigenous community gathering spaces, both indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>6. Hire an Indigenous Community Liaison to lead engagement with local First Nations and the urban Indigenous community in Hamilton. Recommended projects and initiatives within their portfolio include:</p> <p>A) Support the Indigenous Relations Team with relationship-building initiatives that continue to grow connections between the City and the Indigenous communities in and around Hamilton.</p> <p>B) Identify and implement ways to make City spaces and buildings welcoming and safe for Indigenous peoples and ensure they can see themselves reflected in the City's spaces and places.</p> <p>C) Work with the Indigenous curatorial team to design and implement a community engagement plan that includes activities that are interactive, intergenerational, and inclusive.</p> <p>D) Lead Indigenous engagement on the building of Indigenous community gathering space(s) in Hamilton.</p> <p>E) Lead Indigenous engagement required to implement the plan to commemorate sites of significant cultural and historical importance to Indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>P. 25; Goal 14: Establish an Indigenous Cultural Centre that offers interpretive programming, provides a gathering space for Indigenous peoples to practice their ceremonies and hold cultural events.</p> <p>Urban Indigenous people need a space outdoors for gathering, practicing sacred ceremonies and sharing teachings.</p> <p>-Care for the environment, including the land and water, are important. Respecting Indigenous ecological knowledge will benefit environmental restoration and preservation in Hamilton.</p> <p>- Acknowledgment of traditional Indigenous territory in Hamilton should be practised across the city. The City needs to demonstrate this acknowledgement beyond words.</p> <p>p. 26; Goal 23: Bring together partners to offer public education to all residents about the history of Indigenous people and current topics that will contribute to reconciliation. This public education program should include highlighting local Indigenous resources and museums and promote awareness of national holidays such as National Indigenous Peoples Day and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.</p>	<p>Public Engagement requested: Stories and Narratives</p> <p>-Broader representation in the stories told</p> <p>-A greater breadth of story subjects</p> <p>-Use stories to make connections between the museums</p> <p>-Strong appreciation for existing stories and narratives</p> <p>Hamilton Children's Museum already has a site that could easily be the home-base for this project: "Home to interactive, hands-on galleries, the museum encourages learning through self-directed play and offers a range of engaging programs and experiences to children and their families."</p>



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## APPENDIX B

### Traditional Teachings

#### SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS

##### 1. Humility – Dbaadendiziwin

Humility is represented by the wolf. For the wolf, life is lived for his pack and the ultimate shame is to be outcast. Humility is to know that you are a sacred part of creation. Live life selflessly and not selfishly. Respect your place and carry your pride with your people and praise the accomplishments of all. Do not become arrogant and self-important. Find balance in within yourself and all living things.

##### 2. Bravery – Aakwa'ode'ewin

Bravery is represented by the bear. The mother bear has the courage and strength to face her fears and challenges while protecting her young. The bear also shows us how to live a balanced life with rest, survival and play. To face life with courage is to know bravery. Find your inner strength to face the difficulties of life and the courage to be yourself. Defend what you believe in and what is right for your community, family, and self. Make positive choices and have conviction in your decisions. Face your fears to allow yourself to live your life.

##### 3. Honesty – Gwekwaadziwin

Honesty is represented by either the raven or the sabe. They both understand who they are how to walk in their life. "Sabe reminds us to be ourselves and not someone we are not. An honest person is said to walk tall like Kitchi-Sabe... Like Kitchi-Sabe, Raven accepts himself and knows how to use his gift. He does not seek the power, speed or beauty of others. He uses what he has been given to survive and thrive. So must you." The Seven Sacred Teachings of White Buffalo Calf Woman, by: David Bouchard & Dr. Joseph Martin. To walk through life with integrity is to know honesty. Be honest with yourself. Recognize and accept who you are. Accept and use the gifts you have been given. Do not seek to deceive yourself or others.

##### 4. Wisdom – Nbwaakaawin

The beaver represents wisdom because he uses his natural gift wisely for his survival. The beaver also alters his environment in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way for the benefit of his family. To cherish knowledge is to know wisdom. Use your inherent gifts wisely and live your life by them. Recognize your differences and those of others in a kind and respectful way. Continuously observe the life of all things around you. Listen with clarity and a sound mind. Respect your own limitations and those of all of your surroundings. Allow yourself to learn and live by your wisdom.



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### 5. Truth – Debwewin

Truth is represented by the turtle as he was here during the creation of Earth and carries the teachings of life on his back. The turtle lives life in a slow and meticulous manner because he understands the importance of both the journey and the destination. Truth is to know all of these things. Apply faith and trust in your teachings. Show honor and sincerity in all that you say and do. Understand your place in this life and apply that understanding in the way that you walk. Be true to yourself and all other things.

### 6. Respect – Mnaadendimowin

Respect is represented by the buffalo. The buffalo gives every part of his being to sustain the human way of living, not because he is of less value, but because he respects the balance and needs of others. To honor all creation is to have respect. Live honorably in teachings and in your actions towards all things. Do not waste and be mindful of the balance of all living things. Share and give away what you do not need. Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Do not be hurtful to yourself or others.

### 7. Love – Zaagidwin

The eagle that represents love because he has the strength to carry all the teachings. The eagle has the ability to fly highest and closest to the creator and also has the sight to see all the ways of being from great distances. The Eagle's teaching of love can be found in the core of all teachings, therefore an eagle feather is considered the highest honor and a sacred gift. To know love is to know peace. View your inner-self from the perspective of all teachings. This is to know love and to love yourself truly. Then you will be at peace with yourself, the balance of life, all things and also with the creator.

Source: <https://unitingthreefiresagainstviolence.org/the-7-grandfathers-teachin/> Accessed March 11, 2022



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## HAUDENOSAUNEE THANKSGIVING ADDRESS GREETINGS TO THE NATURAL WORLD

### The People

Today we have gathered and we see that the cycles of life continue. We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things. So now, we bring our minds together as one as we give greetings and thanks to each other as people.

Now our minds are one.

### The Earth Mother

We are all thankful to our Mother, the Earth, for she gives us all that we need for life. She supports our feet as we walk about upon her. It gives us joy that she continues to care for us as she has from the beginning of time. To our mother, we send greetings and thanks.

Now our minds are one.

### The Waters

We give thanks to all the waters of the world for quenching our thirst and providing us with strength. Water is life. We know its power in many forms- waterfalls and rain, mists and streams, rivers and oceans. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to the spirit of Water.

Now our minds are one.

### The Fish

We turn our minds to the all the Fish life in the water. They were instructed to cleanse and purify the water. They also give themselves to us as food. We are grateful that we can still find pure water. So, we turn now to the Fish and send our greetings and thanks.

Now our minds are one.

### The Plants

Now we turn toward the vast fields of Plant life. As far as the eye can see, the Plants grow, working many wonders. They sustain many life forms. With our minds gathered together, we give thanks and look forward to seeing Plant life for many generations to come.

Now our minds are one.

### The Food Plants

With one mind, we turn to honor and thank all the Food Plants we harvest from the garden. Since the beginning of time, the grains, vegetables, beans and berries have helped the people survive. Many other living things draw strength from them too. We gather all the Plant Foods together as one and send them a greeting of thanks.

Now our minds are one.



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### **The Medicine Herbs**

Now we turn to all the Medicine herbs of the world. From the beginning they were instructed to take away sickness. They are always waiting and ready to heal us. We are happy there are still among us those special few who remember how to use these plants for healing. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to the Medicines and to the keepers of the Medicines.

Now our minds are one.

### **The Animals**

We gather our minds together to send greetings and thanks to all the Animal life in the world. They have many things to teach us as people. We are honored by them when they give up their lives so we may use their bodies as food for our people. We see them near our homes and in the deep forests. We are glad they are still here and we hope that it will always be so.

Now our minds are one

### **The Trees**

We now turn our thoughts to the Trees. The Earth has many families of Trees who have their own instructions and uses. Some provide us with shelter and shade, others with fruit, beauty and other useful things. Many people of the world use a Tree as a symbol of peace and strength. With one mind, we greet and thank the Tree life.

Now our minds are one.

### **The Birds**

We put our minds together as one and thank all the Birds who move and fly about over our heads. The Creator gave them beautiful songs. Each day they remind us to enjoy and appreciate life. The Eagle was chosen to be their leader. To all the Birds-from the smallest to the largest-we send our joyful greetings and thanks.

Now our minds are one.

### **The Four Winds**

We are all thankful to the powers we know as the Four Winds. We hear their voices in the moving air as they refresh us and purify the air we breathe. They help us to bring the change of seasons. From the four directions they come, bringing us messages and giving us strength. With one mind, we send our greetings and thanks to the Four Winds.

Now our minds are one.





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### **The Thunderers**

Now we turn to the west where our grandfathers, the Thunder Beings, live. With lightning and thundering voices, they bring with them the water that renews life. We are thankful that they keep those evil things made by Okwiseres underground. We bring our minds together as one to send greetings and thanks to our Grandfathers, the Thunderers.

Now our minds are one.

### **The Sun**

We now send greetings and thanks to our eldest Brother, the Sun. Each day without fail he travels the sky from east to west, bringing the light of a new day. He is the source of all the fires of life. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our Brother, the Sun.

Now our minds are one.

### **Grandmother Moon**

We put our minds together to give thanks to our oldest Grandmother, the Moon, who lights the night-time sky. She is the leader of woman all over the world, and she governs the movement of the ocean tides. By her changing face we measure time, and it is the Moon who watches over the arrival of children here on Earth. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our Grandmother, the Moon.

Now our minds are one.

### **The Stars**

We give thanks to the Stars who are spread across the sky like jewelry. We see them in the night, helping the Moon to light the darkness and bringing dew to the gardens and growing things. When we travel at night, they guide us home. With our minds gathered together as one, we send greetings and thanks to the Stars.

Now our minds are one.

### **The Enlightened Teachers**

We gather our minds to greet and thank the enlightened Teachers who have come to help throughout the ages. When we forget how to live in harmony, they remind us of the way we were instructed to live as people. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to these caring teachers.

Now our minds are one.

### **The Creator**

Now we turn our thoughts to the Creator, or Great Spirit, and send greetings and thanks for all the gifts of Creation. Everything we need to live a good life is here on this Mother Earth. For all the love that is still around us, we gather our minds together as one and send our choicest words of greetings and thanks to the Creator.

Now our minds are one.



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## Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address

### Closing Words

We have now arrived at the place where we end our words. Of all the things we have named, it was not our intention to leave anything out. If something was forgotten, we leave it to each individual to send such greetings and thanks in their own way.

Now our minds are one.

This translation of the Mohawk version of the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address was developed, published in 1993, and provided, courtesy of: Six Nations Indian Museum and the Tracking Project All rights reserved.

Thanksgiving Address: Greetings to the Natural World English version: John Stokes and Kanawahienton (David Benedict, Turtle Clan/Mohawk) Mohawk version: Rokwaho (Dan Thompson, Wolf Clan/Mohawk) Original inspiration: Tekaronianekon (Jake Swamp, Wolf Clan/Mohawk)

Source: [https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01\\_02\\_Thanksgiving\\_Address.pdf](https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01_02_Thanksgiving_Address.pdf)

Accessed March 15, 2022



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## SEVEN GENERATIONS PRINCIPLE

Spirituality is a central part of the lives of the Haudenosaunee people but parallel to this is a respect for other religions. Unlike many religions which promote the recruitment of new followers, the Haudenosaunee have never tried to force their beliefs on anyone and allow for their own people to follow their own beliefs without criticism. The Great Law of Peace itself was built into its freedom of religion which is respected by all its followers.

Among the nations of the Haudenosaunee is a core value called the Seventh Generation. While the Haudenosaunee encompass traditional values like sharing labour and maintaining a duty to their family, clan and nation and being thankful to nature and the Creator for their sustenance, the Seventh Generation value takes into consideration those who are not yet born but who will inherit the world.

In their decision-making Chiefs consider how present-day decisions will impact their descendants. Nations are taught to respect the world in which they live as they are borrowing it from future generations. The Seventh Generation value is especially important in terms of culture. Keeping cultural practices, languages, and ceremonies alive is essential if those to come are to continue to practice Haudenosaunee culture.

Source: <https://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com> Accessed Dec 21, 2021



## THE DISH WITH ONE SPOON TREATY- SEWATOKWAT'SHERA'T BELT-GREAT LAW OF PEACE

In 1142 Indigenous people of the Americas had a law called “the Dish with One Spoon” to describe hunting territory to be shared by two or more nations. This treaty or agreement show us just how old such agreements were. Centuries later, this image was still vivid in the relationships entered into between Indigenous people. It had carried on from generation to generation. In fact, in downtown Toronto today, the land acknowledgement declares that we are on the traditional lands of The Dish with One Spoon Treaty. It recalls the treaty or agreement between the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee made in Montreal in 1701 as part of the Great Peace of Montreal, which includes a good part of Southern Ontario. It is such a beautiful, intimate and powerful image of a relationship. The phrase signifies that those sharing the land share a hunting territory. They have the responsibility to take care of the land and the creatures within it. They must be sure that the dish is never empty; that is, they are expected to limit the game they take and leave enough for others. There is to be “no knife near our dish,” indicating that the sharing is to be without bloodshed.

This treaty is graphically illustrated by a wampum belt called The Dish with One Spoon wampum belt. This part of the Great Law of Peace was preserved on the wampum belt, as were many other crucial elements of the law. The belt is short, narrow and plain. It bears a round purple area---the dish with one spoon---on a field of white.

A Wampum is created from the shell of a clam. The bead is cut from the white and purple parts of the shell. The shell is thought of as a living record. A wampum belt is a series of these shells tied together like a necklace. Different colours on the belt as well as the shape of the image on the belt symbolize the event being commemorated. It could be offered to a chief, to an outstanding warrior, it could be offered to a couple from two different tribes who were being united, it could be a form of currency, and it could symbolize a treaty between nations. It is part of recording the oral history of a Nation. While Wampum belts were very common in the East, weaving often illustrated the oral history in parts of the West. As recently as 1924, the RCMP, with approval from the federal cabinet, seized the Wampum that was used to sanction council proceedings of the Six Nations band within the Haudenosaunee Confederacy in Ontario and removed the chiefs from office. In the Great Law of Peace, it is stated that:

*“It will turn out well for us to do this: we will say, ‘We promise to have only one dish among us; in it will be beaver tail and no knife will be there’.. We will have one dish, which means that we will all have equal shares of the game roaming about in the hunting grounds and fields, and then everything will become peaceful among all of the people; and there will be no knife near our dish; which means that if there is a knife were there, someone might presently get cut, causing bloodshed, and this is troublesome, should it happen thus, and for this reason there should be no knife near our dish.”*

There are references in early European records of dealings with the Haudenosaunee that the boundaries of the hunting grounds were sometimes marked with trees.



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## THE TWO ROW WAMPUM BELT

### Gusweñta- The Haudenosaunee and the Dutch agreed to call this the Silver Covenant Chain of Friendship.

Unlike the Dish with One Spoon which was a treaty between Indigenous Nations, the Two Row Wampum belt, created in 1613, represented the oldest recorded treaty between Indigenous people and new settlers from Europe, in this case, the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch.

The Haudenosaunee and the Dutch agreed on three principles to make this treaty last. The first was **friendship**; the Haudenosaunee and their white brothers will live in friendship. The second principle is **peace**; there will be peace between their two people. The final principle is **forever**; that this agreement will last forever.

The belt has two purple rows running alongside each other representing two boats. One boat is the canoe with the Haudenosaunee way of life, laws, and people. The other is the Dutch ship with their laws, religion, and people in it. The boats will travel side by side down the river of life. Each nation will respect the ways of each other and will not interfere with the other. "Together we will travel in Friendship and in Peace Forever; as long as the grass is green, as long as the water runs downhill, as long as the sun rises in the East and sets in the West, and as long as our Mother Earth will last."

Source: <https://circlesforreconciliation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Respect-Trust-Treaties-Reconciliation.pdf> Accessed March 11, 2022



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## APPENDIX C

### UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR URBAN INDIGENOUS SPACES & GOOD RELATIONS

**By Cassidy Caron, First Peoples Group<sup>8</sup>**

Throughout Canada, there is an increase of rural to urban migration of Indigenous peoples. Though statistics about Indigenous identity are difficult to collect, it is widely accepted that over 60% of Indigenous peoples in Canada live in urban centres.

Though many Indigenous peoples who live in cities maintain close ties to their home communities—an integral part of sustaining their traditional cultural practices and identities – this isn't the case for all Indigenous peoples. Urban Indigenous peoples may not have such connections to their communities or ancestral homelands for a number of reasons, including those that involve colonial policies implemented by the Government of Canada. In many cases, Indigenous peoples without close ties to a particular community outside the urban context endure a constant struggle to establish a form of collective identity in the city and have a shared feeling of being “placeless.”

Katherine Neal (2018), explains the importance of carving out spaces or places for urban Indigenous peoples and states that ‘place’ can be conceptualized as, “a social construction and relational site, a ‘meeting-up’ point of relations.”<sup>9</sup> Neal proceeds by explaining the importance of Urban Indigenous organizations and spaces in unifying Urban Indigenous peoples and carving out places for solidarity and knowledge sharing within city boundaries:

*Urban Indigenous organizations and spaces come to symbolize places of resilience and sustainability as they promote the preservation of Indigenous cultures and languages in an urban context... Urban Indigenous-run organizations ‘actively enable people to belong and, though highly mutable, facilitates one’s feeling at home.’<sup>10</sup>*

Neal, continues to explain that urban Indigenous organizations, which ultimately have spaces throughout cities, play “a critical role in promoting kinship relations between Indigenous peoples of different cultural backgrounds, a vital part of identity-construction and reinforcement.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Written in 2019 for City of Kingston as part of the *Engage for Change* project.

<sup>9</sup> Neal, Katherine. (2018). Feeling ‘at home’: Re-evaluating Indigenous identity-making in Canadian cities. Retrieved from: <https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/platform/article/view/18314/7696>. Pg. 81.

<sup>10</sup> Neal. (2018). Pg. 82.

<sup>11</sup> Neal. (2018). Pg. 82.



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Urban Indigenous spaces become important for individuals who are not related by kinship networks or connected to their ancestral homelands to meet, socialize and engage in cross-cultural interactions. Neal explains that:

Kinship networks often manifest in the city between Indigenous peoples of shared ancestral backgrounds, culminating in a form of social organization. The diversity of urban Indigenous communities poses a challenge to the development of social relations between Indigenous people who fall outside these kinship ties, both linguistically and culturally. For individuals who feel isolated from their kinship roots, urban Indigenous organizations and spaces can provide them with the opportunity to re-identify as Indigenous by partaking in cultural activities and engaging with the urban Indigenous community.<sup>12</sup>

Ultimately, urban Indigenous organizations and spaces create a heightened sense of community in cities and “come to symbolize places in which individuals can engage with and situate themselves in the broader urban community without having direct access to a “traditional” land base.”<sup>13</sup>

Many municipalities across Canada are responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and are working with local Indigenous communities to co-create a better future for Indigenous people living in and around urban centres.

### **Case Study: City of Calgary**

The City of Calgary, located on Treaty 7 territory, home to the Kainiaí, Siksika, Piikani, Tsuut’ina and Stoney Nakoda Nations as well as Métis peoples, has undertaken a number of initiatives to better collaborate and respect their Indigenous Nation neighbours as well as seek to serve the large urban Indigenous population in the city – the fifth largest urban Indigenous population in Canada.

### **Gathering Space**

In 2014, a reconciliation workshop was held in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Actions. An outcome of the workshop was a call for a safe place for Indigenous peoples to gather. From this call, the Indigenous Gathering Place Society of Calgary was originated. The group has stated that in two years’ time, Calgary will be home to a new Indigenous Gathering Place.<sup>14</sup>

Indigenous Gathering Place Society is a non-profit organization in Calgary that has been created to guide the development of an Indigenous gathering place in Calgary. The society is comprised of a seven-member board of directors alongside many volunteers. The vision of the society is, “a space where we share, connect, heal, renew and celebrate Indigenous culture. A place to protect Indigenous practices, languages; and Elders’ wisdom, oral and written teachings among all nations and all our relations.”<sup>15</sup>

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12 Neal. (2018). Pg. 82-83.

13 Neal. (2018). Pg. 83.

14 <https://www.calgaryjournal.ca/news/4449-calgary-s-first-Indigenous-gathering-place-will-allow-urban-Indigenous-people-to-thrive.html>

15 <https://www.Indigenousgatheringplace.com/>



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### Urban Indigenous Coalitions

The Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee is a collaborative effort between the City of Calgary and the Indigenous community to address and resolve issues pertaining to urban Indigenous residents.

Mission: "The Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee is authorized, on behalf of City Council, to investigate areas of concern to people of Aboriginal ancestry and to make recommendations on policies. These recommendations are meant to help give urban Aboriginal people a more meaningful role within the governance of the Calgary community."<sup>16</sup>

### Indigenous Policy Framework

In 2017, the City of Calgary published the "Indigenous Policy Framework for The City of Calgary."<sup>17</sup> The policy was directed by City Council and completed by a project team from the City with a consultant who brought together a group of diverse individuals to support the policy development process.

The Indigenous Policy Framework for the City of Calgary is intended to support internal efforts primarily by City Council and Administration to sustain meaningful and mutually beneficial ways forward together with Treaty 7 First Nations and urban Indigenous peoples in the Calgary.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.calgary.ca/CSPS/CNS/Pages/First-Nations-Metis-and-Inuit-Peoples/Calgary-Aboriginal-Urban-Affairs-Committee/Calgary-Aboriginal-Urban-Affairs-Committee.aspx>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.calgary.ca/CSPS/CNS/Documents/CAUAC/Indigenous-Policy-Framework.pdf?noredirect=1>