



# MEMBER MOTION

## Section 5.4.4(b) of Procedure By-law

<b>Meeting:</b>	Committee of the Whole	Council <b>X</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	February 11, 2019	
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Land Acknowledgement	
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Councillor West	

Whereas Indigenous People have lived on the lands we now call Richmond Hill for many centuries and have made, and continue to make, very important contributions to Richmond Hill and to our country of Canada.

Whereas the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission final report outlines many actions that Canadians can, and must take, in order to repair our past relationships with Indigenous Communities.

Whereas “an important first step toward reconciliation is recognizing the existence of Indigenous people. A shared understanding of how our collective past brought us to where we are today will help us walk together into a better future”.<sup>1</sup>

Whereas since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission tabled its final report, an increasing number of organizations and communities are working to make a positive change in our relationship with Indigenous Communities. These communities are demonstrating their commitment to reconciliation by reciting a Land Acknowledgement to begin meetings and public gatherings.

Whereas residents of Richmond Hill have expressed a strong desire to pursue Truth and Reconciliation, as was evidenced in the October 2017 event, that took place in Richmond Hill, called The Secret Path: Walking Towards Reconciliation, and also in activities and policies of many faith based organizations.

Whereas a Land Acknowledgement to begin Council meetings is consistent with actions that we have collectively taken in Richmond Hill in the past few years including the passing of a Council motion in 2018 to honour local Indigenous Communities with dedicating a park or community space in recognition of the important past and present Indigenous contribution to our community, and country.

(continued)

Whereas according to the Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO), “Traditional land acknowledgement statements are increasingly being used in Canada by governments, schools, post-secondary institutions, non-governmental organizations, and other civil institutions as a practice of reconciliation aimed at recognizing the traditional or treaty territories of Indigenous peoples. The statements are typically made at the introduction of meetings, gatherings, events, or presentations”.<sup>2</sup>

Whereas by opening Council meetings with a Land Acknowledgment, Richmond Hill Council would be demonstrating that we are building a community that is contributing in a positive way to reconciliation efforts in Canada.

Therefore Be It Resolved that the following proposed Land Acknowledgement be added to the opening of Richmond Hill Council Meetings beginning with the meeting on February 25, 2019.

### **Land Acknowledgement**

We would like to start by acknowledging that we are on the traditional territories of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe peoples, whose presence here continues to this day. We would also like to acknowledge the land we are on is at the meeting place of two treaties, the lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit and those of the First Nations of the Williams Treaty. We would thank them and other Indigenous peoples for sharing this land with us.

We acknowledge this land and people because the first step to reconciliation is recognizing the existence of Indigenous people. A shared understanding of how our collective past brought us to where we are today will help us walk together into a better future.<sup>3</sup>

Moved by: Councillor West

Seconded by: Councillor Cilevitz

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<sup>1</sup> From the York Region District Public School Board Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

<sup>2</sup> AMO Website

<sup>3</sup> York Region District Public School Board Indigenous Land Acknowledgement