



TOWN OF MINTO

MEETING DATE: August 8, 2023
REPORT TO: Mayor and Council
SERVICE AREA: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: CAO 2023-004 - Town of Minto Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT Council of the Town of Minto receives report CAO 2023-004 regarding the Town of Minto Indigenous Land Acknowledgement; and

THAT Council of the Town of Minto approve the use of the Land Acknowledgement as outlined in report CAO 2023-004.

BACKGROUND:

In the fall of 2021, the Town of Minto, along with several other local municipalities in Wellington County, retained the consulting firm Archaeological Services Inc. (ASI), to assist with the development of meaningful land acknowledgements specific to each community.

While only one part of the larger conversation and needed action around truth and reconciliation, land acknowledgements are an important starting point. They not only acknowledge the presence of Indigenous peoples past and present, but they help educate the community on the traditional lands and treaties, as well as the instances when Indigenous peoples were displaced and excluded from those traditional territories.

COMMENTS:

The “Wellington County Municipalities Land Acknowledgement Project” included background research, municipal consultation, Indigenous community engagement, a critical review of the use of land acknowledgements, as well as a detailed summary of the indigenous history of Wellington County. Please refer to Attachment 1 for the full report.

The results of this project are intended to provide a resource to the Town, Council, and the community to learn from and build upon, as additional steps toward truth and reconciliation are pursued. It is to be considered a living document that should also be reviewed and updated as needed.

Proposed Land Acknowledgement for the Town of Minto

Based on the review completed as part of this project, the following land acknowledgement is proposed:

The lands we know today as the Town of Minto have been home to Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. We acknowledge that we are on the treaty lands and traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee.

With increasing encroachment by non-Indigenous settlers in the Town of Minto, the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee could not continue their traditional lifestyle and settled in their villages on Lake Huron and in the Grand River Valley. These nations uphold their Treaty Rights within our jurisdiction.

Today, the Town of Minto remains home to Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We are grateful to have the opportunity to share and respect Mother Earth and are committed to building constructive and cooperative relationships with Indigenous nations.

Including a Land Acknowledgement

A land acknowledgement is one way the non-Indigenous members of a community can remember and honour the history of a specific place. It is a statement of respect and offer of reconciliation to Indigenous people. As such, there are no set rules guiding when a land acknowledgement should be given, as long as the land acknowledgement is given in a meaningful way and not simply recited out of routine or as a matter of process.

Given the importance of this sign of respect, staff recommend the following approach in providing the land acknowledgement statement:

Shall be included at:

- Inaugural meetings of Council
- Official meetings with Indigenous nations
- Formal Unveilings/Ceremonies

May be considered if appropriate at:

- Other Council meetings or Committee/Public meetings
- Community meetings
- Open Houses, and/or public workshops where there is a formal presentation or welcome

Further, The Land Acknowledgment can also be placed at the beginning of important municipal documents such as Official Plans, Strategic Plans, and Master Plans, and posted to the Town of Minto website.

Next Steps

Truth and Reconciliation is an ongoing process that requires open, frank and sometimes difficult conversations. It is also a call to action for municipalities to take meaningful steps towards addressing the historic and systemic inequities faced by Indigenous peoples. The Town of Minto has the opportunity to build on this first step by continuing to learn more, help educate our local community, and participate as a genuine and collaborative partner in the

reconciliation journey. Staff will look for opportunities to share the information gathered as part of this process with our internal and external stakeholders with the hopes of creating more dialogue, understanding and appreciation.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

The Wellington County Municipalities Land Acknowledgement Project is part of a collaborative initiative, with the costs shared by:

- Township of Centre Wellington
- Township of Guelph/Eramosa
- Township of Mapleton
- Township of Puslinch; and
- Township of Wellington North

The Town of Minto’s financial contribution was \$5,000, funded out of the Town’s approved operating budgets.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Continue to be a leader among small rural municipalities in local strategic initiatives that benefit the economy, protect the environment, effectively allocate resources, encourage innovation, streamline procedures, and create opportunity for individuals and business.

RECOMMENDED BY: Mark Potter, Interim Chief Administrative Officer
Chris Harrow, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Wellington County Municipalities Land Acknowledgement Project (Town of Minto)