

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 5, 2017

Item 10, Report No. 21, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on June 5, 2017.

10

**NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY
ABORIGINAL TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the City Clerk and the Deputy City Manager, Community Services, dated May 23, 2017:

Recommendation

The City Clerk and the Deputy City Manager, Community Services, recommend:

1. That Council, as part of the recognition of National Aboriginal Day, offer a statement at the beginning of the Council meeting of June 27, 2017, as set out in Attachment 1 to this report, that acknowledges Vaughan's traditional Aboriginal territories; and
2. That Council include this territorial acknowledgement as a standing item to be read at the beginning of subsequent Council meetings, until such a time as the City's Procedural By-Law is amended to formally include the acknowledgement.

Contribution to Sustainability

By acknowledging the Aboriginal peoples who lived on the territories now known as the City of Vaughan, this report supports Objective 4.1 of *Green Directions Vaughan*: "To foster a city with strong social cohesion, an engaging arts scene, and a clear sense of its culture and heritage."

Economic Impact

There is no economic impact associated with this report.

Communications Plan

Notice of the offering of a territorial acknowledgement, along with a copy of the statement, will be available in materials related to the City's celebration of National Aboriginal Day.

Purpose

This report responds to a recommendation approved by Council on April 19, 2017 [Item 14, Report No. 13 of the Committee of the Whole], to provide a draft statement of recognition and thanks to the appropriate Aboriginal groups to be read at the Council meeting of June 27, 2017, in recognition of National Aboriginal Day, and address considerations for developing a statement of recognition that could be used on an ongoing basis at future Council meetings.

Background - Analysis and Options

Since the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report in 2015, many public institutions across Canada have made commitments to reconciliation based on a mutually respectful relationship with Aboriginal peoples. In the spirit of reconciliation, many municipal governments across Canada have adopted territorial acknowledgments to precede Council meetings and other gatherings.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 5, 2017

Item 10, CW Report No. 21 – Page 2

Territorial acknowledgments honour the relationship between the lands on which settler communities now live and the many generations of Aboriginal communities that lived on those lands before settlers arrived. Territorial acknowledgments also recognize and pay respect to the present-day Aboriginal groups whose ancestors lived on the lands. Where appropriate, territorial acknowledgments may refer to specific treaties, land transfers, or historical agreements.

According to the Aboriginal history expert consulted by staff, the lands on which are now known as the City of Vaughan are the traditional territories of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation in particular, as well as the Anishinaabeg of the Williams Treaty First Nations, the Huron-Wendat, and the Métis Nation.

The recommended statement of acknowledgement, developed by staff in consultation with the Aboriginal history expert consulted by staff, is set out in Attachment 1.

In order for the statement to be formally included in the Order of Business for subsequent Council meetings, an amendment to the City's Procedural By-Law would be required. Staff anticipate reporting later in the year with proposed updates to the Procedural By-law arising out of proposed amendments to the *Municipal Act*, and the territorial acknowledgement can be included as a formal amendment to the Procedural By-law at that time. In the interim, it is recommended that the territorial acknowledgment be included as a standing item to be read at the beginning of Council meetings.

Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)

This report supports the priority to "Support and promote arts, culture, heritage, and sports in the community," as identified in the Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018).

Regional Implications

N/A

Conclusion

Territorial acknowledgments demonstrate a commitment to the ongoing process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. As June 21 is National Aboriginal Day, the closest Council meeting of June 27, 2017 would be an appropriate time for Council to make its first Aboriginal territorial acknowledgment. It is recommended that Council use the statement provided in this support, which was drafted by staff in consultation with an Aboriginal history consultant.

Attachment

1. Aboriginal Territorial Acknowledgement

Report prepared by:

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(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)