

Township of Southgate
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Staff Report CL2021-027

Title of Report: CL2021-027 – First Nations Land Acknowledgement Implementation Policy
Department: Clerks
Branch: Legislative and Council Services
Council Date: October 6, 2021

Recommendation:

Be it resolved that Council receive Staff Report CL2021-027 for information; and
That Council consider approval of By-law 2021-141 to adopt the First Nations Land Acknowledgment Policy No. 89 to implement a Land Acknowledgement for the Township of Southgate.

Background:

Land or territorial acknowledgements have emerged in several municipalities following the publication of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission report in 2015. A land acknowledgement recognizes First Nations Peoples on whose traditional territories we work and live. These acknowledgements demonstrate the recognition and respect for Indigenous peoples, both in the past and the present and the contributions they have made to our communities and nation.

These statements are most often read at the beginning of Council meetings, municipal events and celebrations with others being read on an occasional basis only in order to continue for them to be meaningful and relevant. Several municipalities within the province have implemented land acknowledgement statements. While there is no standard wording for these statements or consistent practice, the overarching need is for the acknowledgement to be genuine, with a commitment to acknowledge and educate people on the complex history of Indigenous people.

Staff Comments:

At the August 4, 2021, Regular meeting, Council approved staff proceeding with further research and considerations to implementing a first nations land acknowledgement for the Township of Southgate.

Staff have been in contact with representatives of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation as well as staff from the Indigenous Friendship Centre in Owen Sound who have both been tremendously helpful in preparing a land acknowledgement that is inclusive.

Below is the final wording for the land acknowledgement that staff are proposing:

“As we gather, we are reminded that the Township of Southgate is situated on the Traditional Territory of the Anishinabek Nation being the People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations and also acknowledge the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land whom we share with today.”

Staff have also prepared a First Nations Land Acknowledgement policy for approval which provides an overview of when the Land Acknowledgement will be used. The Policy is provided in this Council agenda as Schedule A to By-law 2021-141 following this report.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Communications & Community Action Plan Impact:

This report has been written and presented to Council to communicate accurate information to the public.

Concluding Comments:

That Council receive Staff Report CL2021-027 for information and that Council consider approval of By-law 2021-141 to adopt the First Nations Land Acknowledgment Policy No. 89 to implement a Land Acknowledgement for the Township of Southgate.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dept. Head: *Original Signed By*
Lindsey Green, Clerk

CAO Approval: *Original Signed By*
Dave Milliner, CAO

Attachments: None