

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 20, 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.

Report deferred from the October 6, 2021, Regular Meeting of Council

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 brought forward proposed wording for the land acknowledgement to the October 6, 2021, regular meeting of Council. That decision and the by-law to

implement the land acknowledgment policy was deferred until further review of the wording was completed:

Deputy Mayor Milne moved the following motion.

No. 2021-546

Moved By Deputy Mayor Milne

Seconded By Councillor Dobreen

Be it resolved that Council defer approval of Staff Report CL2021-027 and By-law 2021-141 to allow staff to further review the wording of the land acknowledgement and return to Council as soon as possible. **Carried**

Staff have further reviewed the wording of the land acknowledgement and are now proposing the following wording for approval:

"As we gather, we recognize and acknowledge the traditional keepers of this land with whom we share today. The Township of Southgate is a part of the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Six Nations of the Grand River, Saugeen Ojibway Nation, Haudenosaunee, and Saugeen Métis. The land that surrounds us is part of who we are as it reflects our histories; may we live in peace and friendship with all its diverse people."

Staff are also bringing forward the amended 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 Acknowledgement 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