

Valuable feedback was provided by numerous Indigenous partners from Treaty 4 territory and beyond in the creation of this report.

BACKGROUND

Creation of a City of Moose Jaw Indigenous Engagement Framework Policy is underway. Using the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls To Action as a guide, the Framework will be used to inform meaningful engagement and consultation with Indigenous Nations to better establish partnerships and identify opportunities for social and economic growth.

A Land Acknowledgement is an act of reconciliation recognizing the historical and continuing relationship between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. The Framework Policy will include an approved Land Acknowledgement to be read at City-hosted events.

At a Strategic Leadership meeting in March of 2023, the Communications department was tasked with the creation of an official Land Acknowledgement for City events and City of Moose Jaw email signatures. Currently, many City employees use a Land Acknowledgement as part of their email signature, but the statements vary in language.

The most consistent City of Moose Jaw usage of a Land Acknowledgement occurs at the beginning of City Council meetings. This has been the practice since 2021, and this is the current Land Acknowledgement read by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor:

"We acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the Treaty 4 Territory, a Treaty signed with 35 nations across Southern Saskatchewan and parts of Alberta and Manitoba, on the original lands of the Cree, Saulteaux, Dakota, Nakoda, Lakota, and homeland of the Métis Nation."

DISCUSSION

Multiple Indigenous partners were consulted during the process of creating the proposed Land Acknowledgement, including:

- Lori Deets, Chair, Wakamow Aboriginal Community Association
- Darrell Hawman, President, Southern Plains Metis Local 160
- Dave Pelletier, Indigenous Knowledge Keeper, member of the Moose Jaw Museum and Art Gallery Indigenous Advisory Group
- Barb Frazer, Indigenous Knowledge Systems Educator, member of the Moose Jaw Museum and Art Gallery Indigenous Advisory Group
- Eugene Arcand, Elder
- Dr. Arok Wolvengrey, Professor, Algonquian Languages and Linguistics, First Nations University of Canada
- Prairie Wild Consulting, Consultants leading development of the City of Moose Jaw Cultural Plan
- Office of the Treaty Commissioner – Saskatoon

Some of the key feedback we received indicated that a proper Land Acknowledgement should:

- "Reflect how we got here as a city."
- "Acknowledge our Indigenous history."
- "Accurately reflect where we are on our Truth & Reconciliation journey."
- "Change as we grow."

Barb Frazer suggested the inclusion of the Cree translation of Moose Jaw's name and provided a phonetic pronunciation to us: **mōswa-tāpiskan**.

Additional research uncovered a letter written to Moose Jaw Mayor Al Schwinghamer in July 2003 (Attachment A), from Arok Wolvengrey, then-Assistant Professor, Department of Indian Languages, Literatures and Linguistics, First Nations University of Canada.

The letter details the various versions that exist about how Moose Jaw was named. Although the Land Acknowledgement does not reference Moose Jaw's origin story, it is interesting to note Dr. Wolvengrey's assessment that the common Cree name for Moose Jaw that is represented on the City's Coat of Arms (Attachment B, adopted in 1966) as "Moosoochapiskun" is an "English attempt to represent a Cree word".

Barb Frazer suggested the inclusion of the Cree translation of Moose Jaw's name and provided a similar word to us: **mōswa-tāpiskan**.

We reached out to Dr. Wolvengrey to clarify the slight spelling difference between what Barb Frazer suggested – "moswa-tapiskan" and what Dr. Wolvengrey writes is the literal Cree translation of Moose Jaw: **mōsotāpiskan (or mōsocāpiskan)**.

In a follow-up, Dr. Wolvengrey went into great detail, which you can see in Attachment C, describing the grammatical differences between **mōso-** and **mōswa**. He writes, "Thus, despite the perceived joining of **mōswa** and **-tāpiskan**, the form **mōsotāpiskan...should be preferred.**"

An overriding message we received during our research is that region to region, Territory to Territory, there are different dialects and different pronunciations of words that have been passed down through generations.

Language in the final paragraph of the Land Acknowledgement was informed by comments from Dave Pelletier and Elder Eugene Arcand, and we thank all our Indigenous partners for their specific comments and suggestions that were crucial in developing the recommendation.

Usage of Land Acknowledgements by other municipalities (Regina, Prince Albert and Saskatoon) and post-secondary institutions (Sask Polytech, University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina) was also researched to inform our recommendation.

We are also committing to reviewing the Land Acknowledgement every two years (24 months). Further research and dialogue with Indigenous partners may reveal historical information that warrants inclusion in the future.

Additional research and consultation will also help in the creation of the Indigenous Engagement Framework. Although the Framework is not complete, it was felt that establishing an official Land Acknowledgement was an important step in demonstrating the City of Moose Jaw's commitment to future action, with the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation just days away (as of the September 25 Council Meeting).

We will also undertake further research into the 1966 Coat of Arms, and whether or not it may need to be updated.

Finally, the City of Moose Jaw has taken important strides with Indigenous engagement in 2023, with the hiring of a Communications/Economic Development Officer whose role includes Indigenous Engagement activities.

Since joining the City this past February, Hayley Hart-Rushinko has established positive relationships with Indigenous leaders and organizations and has spent a significant amount of her City time attending, participating in and even hosting local Indigenous events. Examples include the creation of educational videos with Southern Plains Metis Local 160, M.C. of the Wakamow Aboriginal Community Association's Community Conversations event April 27 and Holy Trinity Catholic School Division's Indigenous Peoples Day celebration June 21.

OPTIONS TO RECOMMENDATION

- Do not adopt the new Land Acknowledgement and continue with the current practice.
- Adopt the new Land Acknowledgement for public meetings but do not include on City email signatures.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

If approved, the Land Acknowledgement will be communicated to all stakeholders who may be involved in hosting or organizing a public City of Moose Jaw meeting or event.

The Land Acknowledgement will be placed prominently on the home page of the City's website, www.MooseJaw.ca and the approved, shortened version placed on City letterhead and in the email signature of all who hold a City of Moose Jaw email account.

The Land Acknowledgement will be included in the forthcoming Indigenous Engagement Framework Policy and will be reviewed every two years (24 months).

STRATEGIC PLAN

The City's Land Acknowledgement Protocol supports the long-term strategies of Objective #7 – People and Culture. That objective discusses the need to meet with Elders and First Nations in Moose Jaw to create a closer relationship and the development of a Municipal Cultural Action Plan.

PRESENTATION

Mr. Craig Hemingway, Manager of Communications/Stakeholder Relations, will provide a brief overview of this report. Jim Dixon, Manager of Economic Development, will be in attendance to answer questions related to the Indigenous Engagement Framework Policy.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Letter to Moose Jaw Mayor Al Schwinghamer from Arok Wolvengrey/First Nations University of Canada dated July, 2003.
- B. City of Moose Jaw Coat of Arms.
- C. Dr. Wolvengrey Follow-up letter.

REPORT APPROVAL

Written by: Craig Hemingway
Reviewed by: Dawn Lugin, Assistant City Clerk
Approved by: Maryse Carmichael, City Manager

Authorized for Agenda by: Clive Tolley, Mayor

To be completed by the Clerk's Department only.

Presented to Regular Council or Executive Committee on _____.

Resolution No. _____

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	City of Moose Jaw Land Acknowledgement - CC-2023-0242.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment A_ ArokWolvengreyLetter2003.pdf - Attachment B_ City of Moose Jaw Coat of Arms.pdf - Attachment C_Dr. Wolvengrey Follow-up Letter.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Sep 22, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Dawn Lugin

Maryse Carmichael

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clive Tolley', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Clive Tolley