



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

Report To: Council

From: Andrew M. Siltala, Chief Administrative Officer

Date: July 19, 2021

Report No: ES-005-21

Subject: Recognition of Traditional Lands

Recommendation: THAT Council approve the proposed Land Acknowledgement Statements to be read aloud by the Mayor or designate at the start of public regular and special meetings of Council held in the Town of Milton; at civic celebrations; and other official events that are hosted by the Town of Milton; AND

THAT Council approve the necessary amendment to the Town's Procedure By-law, in order to incorporate a Land Acknowledgement Statement at the regular or special Council meetings; AND

THAT staff be directed to develop a training plan, in collaboration with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, to provide Indigenous cultural awareness for Members of Council and staff.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Land acknowledgements mark a small but important part of the process of reconciliation and building a positive relationship between the settler community (non-Indigenous people) and Indigenous Peoples.
- The acknowledgement of traditional territory demonstrates recognition and respect for First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples and supports education on the history of the lands on which we live and work.
- Staff recommend that the Town of Milton adopt the use of land acknowledgements to cultivate strong relationships with the Indigenous community, heighten Indigenous cultural awareness, recognize our role as stewards of Milton's lands, and the Town's commitment to reconciliation.
- The acknowledgements would take place at:
 - The beginning of public regular and special meetings of Council
 - Civic celebrations and other events hosted by the Town
- Staff worked with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to develop land acknowledgements for Milton's use that are respectful, meaningful and inclusive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Two versions have been developed specific to the type of activity to authentically acknowledge the recognition.
- Staff also recommend the inclusion of a land acknowledgement statement within Council reports. Reports serve to inform public policy decisions. Therefore inclusion of this statement acknowledges Council's responsibility in decision making of policy and Milton's role as stewards of the land.
- Staff recommend that Members of Council and staff participate in Indigenous cultural awareness training prior to the statement being implemented. The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation have offered to provide this training to the Town.

REPORT

Background

On June 22, 2021, Council passed a resolution directing staff to bring forward a staff report to develop recommendations regarding the appropriate protocols and for The Town of Milton to use in conducting town business that respect the traditions of welcome, blessing and acknowledgment of the territory.

Land acknowledgements mark a small but important part of the process of reconciliation and building a positive relationship between the settler community (non-Indigenous people) and Indigenous Peoples.

Discussion

First Nations were the original occupants of this land we call Ontario. Ontario is covered by 46 treaties and other agreements. Treaties define specific rights, benefits and obligations for the signatories that vary from treaty to treaty.

The Town of Milton resides on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people. The majority of these lands are covered by the Ajetance Treaty No. 19 (1818) with a portion of land covered by the Head of the Lake, Treaty No. 14 (1806). A map of the Treaty lands is attached in Appendix A.

A territorial acknowledgement starts with the land. It is about acknowledging the land we reside on and honouring the relationship between the land and the people living and thriving here long before settlers arrived. The acknowledgment offers an opportunity to pay respect to ancestral and traditional territories, be mindful of our collective role as

stewards of the land, and build awareness of present-day First Nation, Metis and Inuit culture in our community.

The Town of Milton's first Culture Plan has been developed to reflect Milton's diversity. The plan identifies avenues for the Town to help culture flourish in Milton. One of the avenues included in the plan is supporting Indigenous cultural resurgence. This particular avenue cites 13 actions, one of which is to adopt an official land acknowledgement.

The Traditional Land Acknowledgement and Use

Staff recommend that the Town of Milton adopt the use of land acknowledgements to cultivate strong relationships with the Indigenous community, heighten Indigenous cultural awareness, recognize our role as stewards of Milton's lands, and the Town's commitment to reconciliation.

The acknowledgements would take place at:

- The beginning of public regular and special meetings of Council
- Civic celebrations and other events hosted by the Town

Staff worked with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to develop land acknowledgements for Milton's use that are respectful, meaningful and inclusive. Statements should be authentic in their use so two versions have been developed for the purposes noted below to genuinely acknowledge the recognition.

Public Regular or Special Council Meeting Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that the land we gather on is part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

We recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people.

We also acknowledge the First Nation, Metis, and Inuit people who live on these lands today.

We commit to working towards reconciliation.

Use:

The acknowledgement may be used by the Mayor or designate at the start of public meetings of council or special council. The acknowledgement may be printed, spoken, or projected.



Civic Celebration or Town of Milton Event Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that the land we gather on is part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

We recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people.

We also acknowledge the First Nation, Metis, and Inuit people who live on these lands today.

We stand as allies with the First Nations as stewards of these lands.

Use:

The acknowledgement may be used by the Mayor or designate, and staff at the start of a civic celebration or a Town-led event. Examples include community events where the Mayor designate is providing remarks and facility, parks, trails or municipal building ground breaking or ribbon cutting events. The acknowledgement may be printed, spoken, or projected.

Council Reports and Policy

Staff also recommend the inclusion of a land acknowledgement statement within Council reports. Reports serve to inform public policy decisions. Therefore inclusion of this statement acknowledges Council's responsibility in decision making of policy and Milton's role as stewards of the land.

The Town of Milton resides on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people. The Town of Milton shares this land and the responsibility for the water, food and resources. We stand as allies with the First Nations as stewards of these lands.

If approved, the inclusion of this statement would be implemented for September's Council Reports.

A policy has been developed to guide the use of Land Acknowledgments. Attached to this report is Appendix B - Use of Traditional Land Acknowledgements Policy.

Staff would like to acknowledge and thank Darin P. Wybenga, Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Coordinator, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, for his guidance, knowledge and support in the development of these land acknowledgments.

Procedural By-Law

In order for the land acknowledgment to be spoken, printed or projected at the beginning of regular or special Council meetings, Procedural By-Law 007-2019, as amended, must be updated to include reference to the land acknowledgement.

Specifically Part 7, 7.22 Opening Procedure now states:

Every regular Council meeting shall commence with a moment of silent reflection, the singing of O' Canada and the Traditional Land Acknowledgement.

The updated Procedural By-Law has been included in this meeting agenda for Council's consideration.

Indigenous Cultural Awareness

As noted, the land acknowledgement marks a small but important step in the process of reconciliation and building positive relationships with the First Nations, Metis, and Inuit communities in Milton.

When using a land acknowledgment statement, it is important that those using the statement understand the history of the land, including the treaties and Indigenous histories.

Therefore, staff recommend that Members of Council and staff participate in Indigenous cultural awareness training prior to the statement being implemented. The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation have offered to provide this training to the Town.

Additional work is being undertaken or in progress to build positive relationships and enhance Milton's Indigenous cultural competency and awareness:

- As mentioned previously, Milton's first Culture Plan has been developed and cites 13 action items to support Indigenous cultural resurgence
- An Indigenous consultation and engagement framework is in progress to guide staff specific to our land use and infrastructure planning
- Staff have met with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and will continue to build this relationship. Staff are also meeting with Indigenous groups and organizations (e.g., Grandmothers Voice) in Milton and neighbouring First Nations. The goal is to open dialogue, build relationships, and for staff to increase knowledge of Indigenous narrative, history and heritage, along with identifying opportunities for meaningful partnership, collaboration, engagement and input.



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- Town staff have met with Grandmother's Voice to learn about the development of the Urban Indigenous Centre of Excellence at Country Heritage Park in Milton. Staff look forward to the opportunities to support this important initiative.
- The Town's Council Staff Work Plan includes the development of a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to celebrate diversity and promote both inclusion and equity within the organization and community

Staff will continue to update Council on progress of these initiative as required.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts as a result of this report. Any costs associated with cultural awareness training are covered through approved operational budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew M. Siltala
Chief Administrative Officer

For questions, please contact: Carrie Beatty

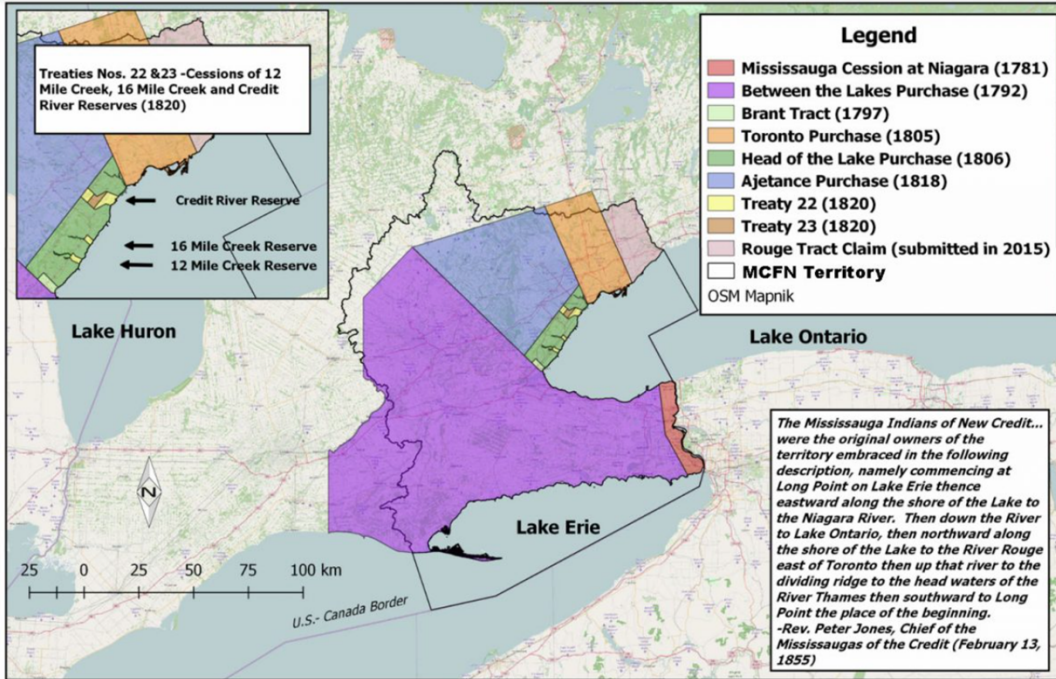
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Attachments

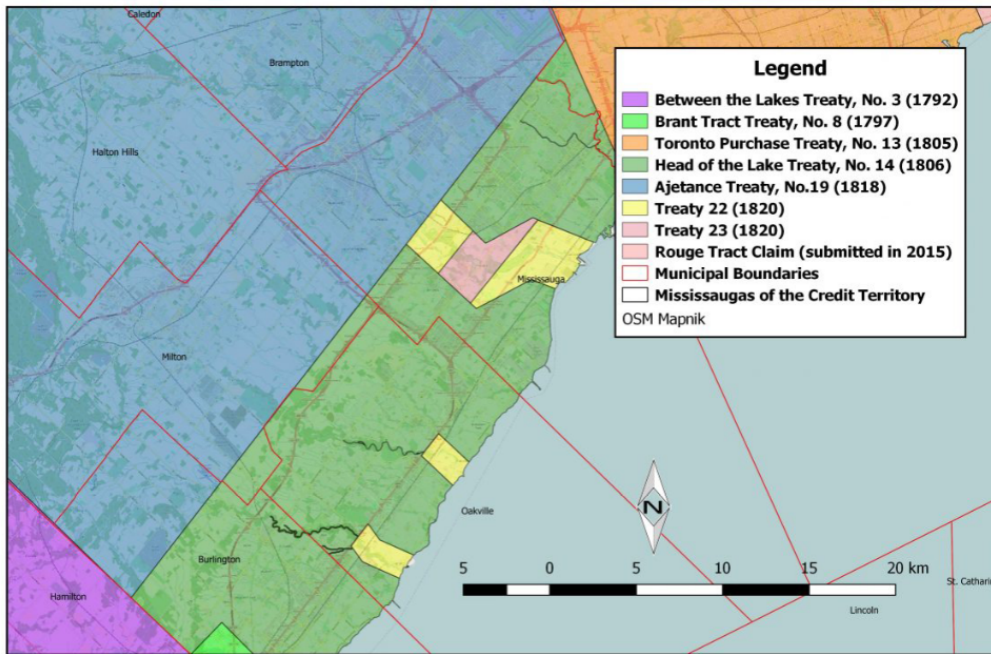
Appendix A - Map of Treaty Lands
Appendix B - Use of Traditional Land Acknowledgments Policy

CAO Approval
Andrew M. Siltala
Chief Administrative Officer

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Maps



Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Land Cessions 1781-1820 and Rouge Tract Claim, 2015



Municipal Boundaries Related to Treaty Nos. 22 & 23

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| POLICY: Use of Traditional Land Acknowledgments | POLICY NO. 0XX |
| EFFECTIVE DATE: XXX, X, 2021 | REVISED: n/a |

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the use of the traditional land acknowledgement statements for the Town of Milton.

The traditional land acknowledgment statements were adopted by Council on July 19, 2021.

POLICY PURPOSE

A territorial acknowledgement starts with the land. It is about acknowledging the land we reside on and honouring the relationship between the land and the people living and thriving here long before settlers arrived. The acknowledgment offers an opportunity to pay respect to ancestral and traditional territories; be mindful of our collective role as stewards of the land; and build awareness of present-day First Nation, Metis and Inuit culture in our community.

Recognizing the territory, treaty and lands to which Milton's resides serves to cultivate strong relationships with the Indigenous community, heighten Indigenous cultural awareness, recognize our role as stewards of Milton's lands, and the Town's commitment to reconciliation.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

First Nations were the original occupants of this land we call Ontario. Ontario is covered by 46 treaties and other agreements. Treaties define specific rights, benefits and obligations for the signatories that vary from treaty to treaty.

The Town of Milton resides on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people. The majority of these lands are covered by the Ajetance Treaty No. 19 (1818) with a portion of land covered by the Head of the Lake, Treaty No. 14 (1806). **A map of the Treaty lands is attached. Appendix A.**

STATEMENTS AND USE

The Town of Milton consulted the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to develop land acknowledgements for Milton's use that are respectful, meaningful and inclusive.

Statements should be authentic in their use so two versions have been developed for the purposes noted below to genuinely acknowledge the recognition.

1. Public Regular or Special Council Meeting Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that the land we gather on is part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

We recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people.

We also acknowledge the First Nation, Metis, and Inuit people who live on these lands today.

We commit to working towards reconciliation.

Use: The acknowledgement may be used by the Mayor or designate at the start of public meetings of council or special council. The acknowledgement may be printed, spoken, or projected.

2. Civic Celebration or Town of Milton Event Land Acknowledgement

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We stand as allies with the First Nations as stewards of these lands.

Use: The acknowledgement may be used by the Mayor or designate, and staff at the start of a civic celebration or a Town-led event. Examples include community events where the Mayor designate is providing remarks and facility, parks, trails or municipal building ground breaking or ribbon cutting events. The acknowledgement may be printed, spoken, or projected.

3. Council Reports

Council reports serve to inform public policy decisions. Therefore inclusion of this statement acknowledges Council's responsibility in decision making of policy and Milton's role as stewards of the land.

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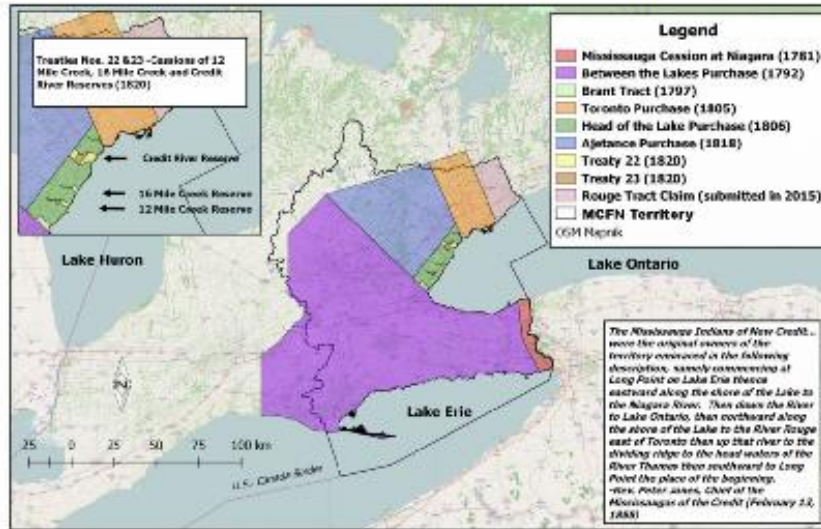
Use: This statement is included within the Council report template and within all Council reports.

PRACTICE

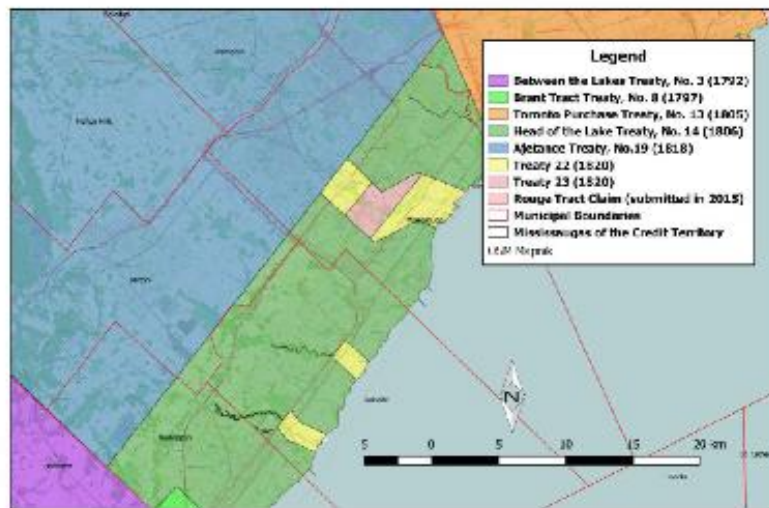
For a territorial acknowledgment to be meaningful, it is important that it is delivered with a sense of purpose and authenticity.

The Town of Milton recognizes that various terms may be preferred over others, and that preferred terms can change over time. The Town's practice will be to honour First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in our community with the terms they wish to be identified.

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Maps



Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Land Cessions 1781-1820 and Rouge Tract Claim, 2015



Municipal Boundaries Related to Treaty Nos. 22 & 23