



Councillor **Mary-Margaret McMahon**

Chair of Parks and Environment

Ward 32 Beaches/East York

councillormcmahon.com

May 26, 2017

Dear Parks and Environment Vice-Chair and Members:

RE: Incorporating Indigenous Place-making in Toronto's Parks Capital Projects

Background:

In June 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its Calls to Action Report. While the report outlines 8 Calls to Action that recognize the role of municipalities relating to health, reconciliation, professional development and training, museum and archives and other areas, it is equally important that we use an indigenous lens when looking at opportunities for place-making within our City parks.

By planning, designing and managing public spaces through a people-centered lens, place-making allows for the creation of more meaningful relationships between people and the place that they call home. Place-making allows for the social capital of our city's citizens to be celebrated by entirely rethinking what impact a place can have on a community. Creating good public spaces promote people's health, happiness, and economic well-being in ways previously unseen.

According to the Toronto Indigenous Health Strategy, Toronto is home to an estimated 70,000 Indigenous people from coast to coast to coast. The traditional keepers of the land, the Wendat, Haudenasauenee, and Anishinaabe have a relationship of 15,000+ years in the making. Yet, when we walk down our city streets, through our parks, and in our institutions, we are hard-pressed to see that history and that relationship reflected. Few examples exist which have the engagement and feeling of ownership from the Indigenous community.

Indigenous place-making looks different depending on the context of its surroundings and community. Each project is shaped uniquely by the communities interacting with it. As such, the following recommendation is not only an essential component of reconciliation, but a necessary one.

Recommendations:

1. That Parks and Environment Committee request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation develop a framework for applying Indigenous place-making

principles to projects within the Parks, Forestry and Recreation 10-year Capital Plan and report back to the Parks and Environment Committee in September 2017.

Sincerely,

Mary-Margaret McMahon
Ward 32 Beaches-East York