

## City Council

### Notice of Motion

MM12.15	ACTION			Ward: 8
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### **Request for Report on the Feasibility of Renaming Eglinton Park to Tom Longboat - Cogwagee Park - by Councillor Mike Colle, seconded by Councillor Josh Matlow**

*\* Notice of this Motion has been given.*

*\* This Motion is subject to referral to the North York Community Council. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

#### **Recommendations**

Councillor Mike Colle, seconded by Councillor Josh Matlow, recommends that:

1. City Council request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to consult with the local community and key stakeholders and work with and seek the assistance of the Indigenous Affairs Office, to engage the Indigenous community and report to North York Community Council with recommendations by the second quarter of 2020 on the feasibility of renaming Eglinton Park in memory of Tom Longboat - Cogwagee, as well as installing the appropriate signage.

#### **Summary**

The purpose of this Motion is to increase public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of our Indigenous history, and culture within the area of Ward 8, Eglinton-Lawrence, through the consideration of renaming Eglinton Park, also known as Pears Park (the Pears family owned the Pears Brickworks, which was situated on the present site) in honour of local resident Tom Longboat, one of Canada's most outstanding Indigenous athletes, as well as the significant Indigenous heritage of the land where Eglinton Park is situated.

Toronto is one of the most diverse cities in the world and home to approximately 100,000 First Nations, Metis and Inuit, making it one of the largest Indigenous urban populations in Canada. Indigenous people's history can be traced back thousands of years, yet, there is very little visibility of these diverse and vibrant Indigenous communities in the City, despite Toronto being a city created on treaty and Indigenous land. The traditional keepers of the land, the Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Anishnabeg 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, culture and relationship reflected.

Tom Longboat – Cogwagee was a member of the Onondaga Nation, was born at Six Nations of the Grand River. He began running competitively in his late teens and swiftly rose to

international fame as a world champion long-distance runner. Between 1906 and 1909, he won a series of races including the Boston Marathon, the Toronto Ward's Marathon, and the World's Professional Marathon Championship at Madison Square Garden. He went on to break numerous world records, including a record one hour and eighteen minutes for the fifteen-mile race in 1912.

Tom Longboat - Cogwagee served his country as a dispatch runner in France when he enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces during the First World War and also volunteered for Service at the outbreak of World War II, and later settled in Toronto where he raised his family and worked for the City of Toronto's street-cleaning department from 1929 to 1944. He lived in a series of homes in North Toronto, including residences on Erskine Avenue and Roslin Avenue.

Tom Longboat – Cogwagee was inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame in 1955 and is celebrated as being Canada's greatest long-distance runner and one of the world's most famous athletes in the early 20th Century.

Moreover, Eglinton Park is a particularly significant site within the City's landscape of Indigenous history and presence. The area north-west of Eglinton Avenue West and Avenue Road (around St. Clemens Avenue and Roselawn Avenue) was a southern settlement of the people of the Huron-Wendat Nation since the 1400's. Renaming the Park would not only honour a great Canadian, athlete and War Veteran but would also honour the contributions of the Indigenous peoples of Toronto.

Thoughtfully considering Indigenous naming is a part of the City of Toronto's broader efforts in Indigenous place-making. The Place-Making initiative emerges from ongoing work led by City staff, partner agencies and Indigenous leaders and activists to better reflect the City's commitment to truth and reconciliation in parks and the public realm, and catalyzed in a request from the former Parks and Environment Committee to develop an "Indigenous Place-Making Framework".

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 truth and reconciliation; it is also a necessary one.

### **Background Information (City Council)**

Member Motion MM12.15