



COBOURG

Land Acknowledgement Guide

Purpose of this Document

Town of Cobourg staff, volunteers, Board members, Advisory Committee members, and Councillors can use this document to guide their practice and actions around the use of the Town of Cobourg's Land Acknowledgement. A Land Acknowledgement is a first step in the Reconciliation process, done to acknowledge and honour the First Peoples that have lived here for thousands of years, and the enduring presence of Indigenous Persons in the area for time immemorial.

When a land acknowledgement is being given, Town of Cobourg staff, volunteers, Board members, Advisory Committee members, and Councillors will pause, be present, reflect, and consider how to impact change in their work. This can include conscious thought on our place here, these lands, and how colonization and the oppression of Indigenous Persons has privileged some over others.

Indigenous Persons typically give thanks, appreciation, and respect for all in creation, including their ancestors, communities, other beings, clans, allied nations, and Mother Earth at the start of gatherings, ceremonies, and events. For settler Canadians moving toward implementing this teaching, it is also about public Acknowledgement of this respect towards and recognition of Indigenous Peoples, practices, and ways of knowing.

Thank you to the City of Toronto for allowing us to use their Land Acknowledgement Guide as a resource.

Outcomes from Using this Document and Land Acknowledgement

Town of Cobourg staff and partners will:

1. Reflect on their relationship to these lands.
2. Gain a better understanding of the treaties that cover Cobourg and Northumberland County.
3. Have a greater understanding of the phrase "we are all Treaty people."
4. Understand the important of honouring and giving respect to First Peoples, here with us today and their ancestors.
5. Have a better sense of ways and practices to create good relationships and connections with various Indigenous communities, especially that of our neighbours Alderville.

Town of Cobourg's Land Acknowledgement

On May 13, 2019, Council resolved:

THAT Council adopt a traditional land acknowledgement statement to be read at the beginning of its meetings; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to consult with Alderville First Nations to draft a traditional land acknowledgement statement that reflects the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), Ojibway/Chippewa peoples, as well as this territory that is covered by the Williams Treaty.

Town of Cobourg Staff worked with Alderville First Nations to create a Land Acknowledgement for the Town of Cobourg. In addition, Staff conferred with the Nogojiwanong (Peterborough) Friendship Centre was contacted for further information and resources.

Land Acknowledgement for the Town of Cobourg

We respectfully acknowledge that we are located in the traditional and treaty territory of the Michi Saagiig (Mississauga) and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include: Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations.

We respectfully acknowledge that the Williams Treaties First Nations have been stewards and caretakers of these lands and waters, and that today remain vigilant over their health and integrity for generations to come.

We are all Treaty people.

Pronunciation Guide

Pronunciation Guide:

- **Anishnabeg:** Awe – Nish – Nah - Beck
- **Haudenosaunee:** Hoe – De – Nah – Show - Nee
- **Chippewa:** Chip – A - Wah
- **Wendat:** When - Dat
- **Inuit:** Δ (ee) ɔ (nu) Δ^c (eet)
- **Métis:** May – Tee

Importance of Land Acknowledgements¹

Land acknowledgement is a way that people insert an awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights in everyday life. This is often done at the beginning of ceremonies, lectures, or any

¹ Jones, Allison. "NativeLand.ca - Territory Acknowledgement." Native, 2019, native-land.ca/resources/territory-acknowledgement/.

public event. It can be a subtle way to recognize the history of colonialism and a need for change in settler colonial societies.

It is important that Land Acknowledgements do not become a token gesture rather than a meaningful practice. All settlers, including recent arrivals, have a responsibility to consider what it means to acknowledge the history and legacy of colonialism. When pausing to reflect while giving a Land Acknowledgement, it is important to consider:

1. What are some privileges settlers enjoy today because of colonialism?
2. How can individuals develop relationships with peoples whose land they are living on in the contemporary Canadian geopolitical landscape?
3. What are you doing beyond acknowledging the land where you live, work, play, or hold events?
4. What might you be doing that perpetuates settler colonial futurity rather than considering alternative ways forward for Canada?
5. Do you have an understanding of the on-going violence and the trauma that is part of the structure of colonialism?

Land Acknowledgements are a small part of disrupting and dismantling colonial structures.

Truth and Reconciliation

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) spent five years travelling across Canada, hearing stories about Residential School experiences and their effects. The TRC created many documents detailing their findings; most importantly, the 94 Calls to Action that urge all levels of government, including Indigenous, to work together to repair the harm done and to move forward with reconciliation. Covering hundreds of years of history, thousands of stories heard, and many published reports, it can be hard to fully comprehend the work done.

The 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are divided into two sections: legacy and reconciliation. These recommendations were created to “redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation”[ii], and now are serving as a barometer for Canada’s reconciliation progress.

Reconciliation is a complicated thing, and involves many people, stories, and initiatives. As a country, Canada is now moving in the right direction, in the hopes that it will “inspire Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples to transform Canadian society so that our children and grandchildren can live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands that we now share”[iii]. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s work is only the beginning.

[Read the Calls to Action and get involved in creating Reconciliation.](#)