

# Declaration in Support of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Adopted unanimously (9-0) by St. John's City Council on September 21, 2020

In order to promote and strengthen mutually respectful relationships with the urban Indigenous community in St. John's and with all other First Peoples in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, the City of St. John's hereby recognizes that:

- The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, of which the City of St. John's is the capital, exists on the ancestral homelands of the Inuit, the Innu, the Mi'kmaq, and the Beothuk;
- The culture of the Beothuk has been lost forever and can never be recovered;
- Indigenous Peoples continue to endure many hardships and injustices that began with first contact and that have created significant social, economic, and health disparities;
- Indigenous Peoples were excluded from the Terms of Union when Newfoundland and Labrador joined Canada in 1949, which limited access to programs and services that otherwise would have been available to them;
- Indigenous Peoples have distinct and diverse histories, cultures, and identities;
- Self-determination is an inherent right of all Indigenous Peoples; and
- St. John's has the fastest growing urban Indigenous population in Canada.




Acting therefore in support of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, the City of St. John's hereby declares its commitment to:

- Support and promote the implementation of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP);
- Work to decolonize the City by making indigenization and anti-racism priorities with respect to its governance, municipal services, and infrastructure;
- Recognize and celebrate the many contributions that Indigenous Peoples have made and continue to make to our City, province, and country;
- Maintain membership in First Voice while continuing to build equal partnerships with Indigenous organizations in the City;
- Collaborate with the urban Indigenous community to develop, promote, and implement a shared Community Action Plan and to report annually to Council on progress toward achieving its objectives; and
- Work with all levels of government, including the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Canada, to recognize, support, and advance the rights of Indigenous Peoples.



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Danny Breen, Mayor  
City of St. John's  
September 24, 2020



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Susan Onalik, President  
First Light's Board of Directors  
September 24, 2020