

**Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Calgary Monthly Meeting**

The City of Calgary
Office of the Councillors (8001)
P.O. Box 2100, Station M
Calgary, AB, Canada T2P 2M5

January 28, 2022

Dear Councillors,

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) of Calgary join the many partner organizations of the Indigenous Gathering Place Society of Calgary (IGPSC) and endorse the traditional indigenous and western decision-making processes that have determined our goals and lobbying practices. While a slower process, it has, over time, yielded increasingly greater commitment on the part of individual and institutional members. We all look forward to realizing the dream of an Indigenous Gathering Place in Calgary.

In the light of a new consciousness regarding the current and potential place of Indigenous history, culture, and traditions, it appears self-evident, that our vibrant, forward-looking metropolis would greatly benefit from having a physical expression of its people's yearning for recognition, healing and celebration. Calgary needs an Indigenous Gathering Place to showcase and affirm the continued presence and value of indigenous peoples and cultures in our treaty area.

Healthy sharing occurs when like-minded organizations are in physical proximity. Staff, volunteers, and patrons all benefit from a friendly, equitable approach to sharing resources and the quality of each endeavour is enhanced. Currently elders and knowledge keepers have no welcoming environment to connect people with indigenous heritage. In addition, non-indigenous organizations like ours seek opportunities to be educated in indigenous culture and issues. While institutions like the Public Library have made strides in facilitating exchanges, a dedicated gathering place will encourage and reflect respect for indigenous cultures in our city's history and contemporary life. The building -- its historically significant location, its stature, and the activities it holds -- will be a physical expression of reconciliation, healing, and celebration. Our youth will grow in its presence with the knowledge that indigenous culture and traditions are important to us as a society.

We ask you to vote to transfer land near the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers to the Indigenous Gathering Place Society of Calgary and to continue to prioritize this important project.

Dana Bush, Clerk
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cc Indigenous Gathering Place Society of Calgary
A signed hardcopy has also been sent through Canada Post.