

# CITY OF HAMILTON

## MOTION

**Emergency and Community Services Committee: July 8, 2021**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR N. Nann .....**

**SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR .....**

### **Removal of Sir John A. MacDonald Statue from Gore Park, Hamilton**

WHEREAS, in 1879 Sir John A. MacDonald said “When the school is on the reserve, the child lives with its parents, who are savages, and though he may learn to read and write, his habits and training mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write. It has been strongly impressed upon myself, as head of the Department, that Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men”;

WHEREAS, the atrocities of the residential school system were described by the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) as “a systematic, government-sponsored attempt to destroy [Indigenous] cultures and languages and to assimilate [Indigenous] peoples so that they no longer existed as distinct peoples”;

WHEREAS, Indigenous residents across Hamilton have been in profound grief since the unmarked graves of 215 Indigenous children were confirmed at the Kamloops Residential School, 751 more at Marieval Residential School in Saskatchewan, now exceeding a thousand and counting;

WHEREAS, the Hamilton City Council committed to having “a trusting relationship with Indigenous communities where we communicate and work together appropriately to address the unique needs and issues of Indigenous people” through the adoption of the Urban Indigenous Strategy in July 2019 and the endorsement of the Urban Indigenous Strategy Implementation Plan on February 4, 2021;

WHEREAS, in adopting Urban Indigenous Strategy, Hamilton City Council committed to act in alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations;

WHEREAS, Hamilton is falling behind the example set by other city councils, in Ontario and nationwide, starting in 2018, that have already removed statues of Sir John A.

MacDonald from public spaces, including Victoria, Wilmont, Regina, Charlottetown, Picton and Kingston;

WHEREAS, over 17,000 people identify as Indigenous in the City of Hamilton; and

WHEREAS, over several years, survivors of residential schools, Indigenous elders and families, members of the Hamilton Aboriginal Advisory Committee, participants of the Urban Indigenous Strategy consultations, and hundreds more in the form of public demonstrations have clearly communicated to the City of Hamilton about the need to remove the Sir John A. MacDonald statue from Gore Park in order to facilitate healing.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That staff be directed to immediately remove the statue of Sir John A. MacDonald from City of Hamilton owned lands known as Gore Park and place it in storage; and
- (b) That the cost for removal and storage be covered through the Tax Stabilization Reserve Account.