



# POLICY

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<b>POLICY NO:</b>	125	<b>APPROVAL DATE:</b>	April 17, 2023
<b>TITLE:</b>	Land Acknowledgement	<b>REVISION DATE:</b>	
<b>SECTION:</b>	Administration	<b>LAST REVIEWED:</b>	April 17, 2023
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Intergovernmental Affairs	<b>PAGE 1 OF 3</b>	

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## POLICY STATEMENT

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The City of Grande Prairie (“City”) recognizes a land acknowledgement as an act of Truth and Reconciliation. Indigenous people have been implementing land acknowledgements as a part of their culture for many years.

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## REASON FOR POLICY

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To ensure that a land acknowledgement specific to our location is used in a consistent and appropriate manner.

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## DEFINITIONS

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“**Beaver**” Tsattine (Saht-su-nah) or Beaver (Dane-zaa) means the original people who lived in northwestern Alberta before the disruptions of the colonial era. There are several Beaver clans. The Tsattine River people are those whose traditional territory centers around the Peace River of Northwestern Alberta.

“**Cree**” Nêhiyaw (Nay-hee-ow) means the most populous and widely distribute Indigenous people in Canada. Other words the Cree use to describe themselves include Nêhiyaw, nihithaw, nehinaw and ininiw. Cree First Nations occupy territory in the Subarctic region from Alberta to Quebec, as well as portions of the Plains region in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

“**Dene**” (Deh-ney) comprise a far-reaching cultural and linguistic family, stretching from the Canadian North and Alaska to the American southwest. In Canada, the Dene, which means “the people” in their language, comprises a variety of First Nations, some of which include the Denesoline (Chipewyan), Tlicho (Dogrib) and Dinjii Zhuh (Gwich’in). The Dene are also known as Athabaskan, Athabaskan, Athapascan or Athapaskan peoples.

“**First Nation**” means any group of Indigenous peoples of Canada officially recognized as an administrative unit by the federal government or functioning without official status. The term is generally understood to exclude the Inuit and Métis.

“**Inuit**” means a member of a group of Indigenous peoples inhabiting northernmost North America from northern Alaska to eastern Canada and Greenland.

**“Métis”** means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples and is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry. One of the Indigenous peoples of Canada, the Métis people, are distinct from Inuit and First Nations people; they are descended from First Nations people who intermarried with European fur traders in the 18th century in the Canadian west. The word “Métis” comes from the Latin *misère*, meaning “to mix”. Michif is a distinguished language of several Métis communities. Alberta is home to the only recognized Métis land base in Canada, with eight (8) Métis Settlements located primarily in the east-central and northern areas of the province.

**“Sovereign Nations”** is also recognized by the Canadian government, meaning that both Canada and Indigenous Peoples maintain their own sovereign states. Sovereign states indicate that they are two (2) separate governing states residing on the same land.

**“Time Immemorial”** means a time in the past that was so long ago that people have no knowledge or memory of it.

**“Treaty 8”** was signed on 21 June 1899 by the Crown and First Nations of the Lesser Slave Lake area. The treaty covers roughly 841,487,137 km<sup>2</sup> of what was formerly the Northwest Territories and British Columbia and now includes northern Alberta, northwest Saskatchewan, and portions of the modern Northwest Territories and British Columbia, making it the largest treaty by area in the history of Canada.

**“Turtle Island”** means for some Indigenous people, Turtle Island refers to the continent of North America. The name comes from various Indigenous oral histories that tell stories of a turtle that holds the world on its back. For some Indigenous people, the turtle is therefore considered an icon of life, and the story of Turtle Island consequently speaks to various spiritual and cultural beliefs.

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## **RELATED INFORMATION**

A land acknowledgement is a moment to recognize the caretakers’ sacrifices to preserve the land. Land acknowledgements may also provide an educational element as well by detailing the names of nations and places.

This Policy has been developed with the consultation of various Indigenous organizations and community members, as well, through internal stakeholders in the City’s organization and are congruent with organizations across Canada that value Truth and Reconciliation.

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## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

### **Land Acknowledgement:**

*“The City respectfully acknowledges the Beaver, Cree, Dene, and Métis people as the original caretakers of these Lands and surrounding areas. We are grateful to live, learn, work and play on Treaty 8 territory within Turtle Island and acknowledge these Lands have been home to diverse and sovereign First Nations and Inuit Nations since Time Immemorial.”*

To be used as the City's printed and/or verbalized land acknowledgement at the commencement of larger public and formal events which includes Council meetings, public announcements, sports and tourism events, large public events in the City, and the first meeting of Committee days. This land acknowledgement will also be publicized in legible text and strategically placed on posters, publicized brochures or booklets, central meeting locations, public spaces and on the City's website.

**Shortened Land Acknowledgement:**

*"The City acknowledges we are on Treaty 8 territory within Turtle Island, home to the Beaver, Cree, Dene, Métis, and other diverse Indigenous Sovereign Nations."*

To be used only in written situations where available space limits the legibility of the full Land Acknowledgement.

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**RESPONSIBILITIES**

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City Council will review and approve any revisions to this Policy.

City Manager will review and approve any procedures related to this Policy.

City Administration will carry out the policy based on established procedures.