

November 18th, 2021

To the Indigenous Gathering Place Society of Calgary,

We are writing to express our heartfelt support for the creation of an Indigenous Gathering Place in Calgary.

When our members first committed to working together towards Truth and Reconciliation, they began a process of listening to Indigenous Leaders and Elder. Again and again, they heard was the need for an Indigenous Gathering Place that would be a centre for ceremony and community. We heard stories about how people had found healing through embracing traditional ceremonies, but we also heard that while there were over 500 places of worship for other faiths, there was nowhere set aside for Indigenous people to have their spiritual practices in Calgary. We heard stories of people coming to the city and seeking to connect to an indigenous community, but because they were unable to find a connecting point they became lost. We heard stories about not having a place for a funeral or other community gatherings. We also heard how there are many places that provided services and are orientated towards Indigenous people as "vulnerable people", there was not a place for Indigenous people to gather, as a people, in the strength of their culture and community.

Based on this listening, since 2017, we have been actively supporting the creation of an Indigenous Gathering place in Calgary. Since that time, our members of been engaged in speaking with city councillors and the Mayor and asking for their support of an Indigenous Gathering Place. Our member organizations have educated their members about the need for such a gathering place in Calgary. Our members also participated in the community engagement process of listening for what a gathering place needs to become so that it serves the community.

When the Indigenous Gathering Place is built in Calgary, it will be a gift for all Calgarians. It is a way of making truth and reconciliation real. It is a way of recognizing who's land we gather on. It is also a way for all Calgarians to celebrate and learn from the wisdom of the people who originally gathered at Mohkinstsis.



On Behalf of the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good.



Ryan Andersen
Lead Organizer



Suzanne Karhiio Dzus
Organizer

