February 8, 2022

Dear Madam Mayor and Members of City Council:

Please accept this as our letter of support for the Indigenous Gathering Place of Calgary.

As a small grassroots Society whose mission is to provide leadership in Aboriginal, government and industry relations by creating a circle of relatives to foster a broad understanding of different perspectives, the similarities between the organizational objectives of CFAR and IGP are clear. The Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society would like to express our wholehearted support of the Indigenous Gathering Place.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People states that Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain "their institutional structures and their distinctive customs, spirituality, traditions, procedures, practices and, in the cases where they exist, juridical systems or customs, in accordance with international human rights standards." The Indigenous Gathering Place will provide a central place for Indigenous Peoples to safely gather and to participate in and share (as appropriate) ceremonies and traditional activities.

The actualization of a vision to create a cultural and spiritual space specifically devoted to Indigenous peoples – the first of its kind in Calgary at this level and in many years – will significantly advance reconciliation and provide expanded meaningful opportunity for connection within the community; as well as a place where all citizens can benefit through impactful learning with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous community members.

The Indigenous Gathering Place is needed and will reinspire pride in community, place, and heritage for all Calgarians but especially for the oft overlooked First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples who have made our city their home.

We are excited to witness the many positive impacts for Mohkinstsis and well beyond the city's borders that a place to call our own will engender.

Yours Sincerely,

Sandra Sutter
President of the Board
Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society