



POLICY

Policy Type: Library Services **Policy Number:** 03-20
Policy Title: Land Acknowledgements

Purpose and Scope:

To provide a land acknowledgement framework which will be included on the library website and used when appropriate to acknowledge the land at library meetings, programs, and events.

To provide a list of resources for further learning, which are included with the land acknowledgement on the website and can be referenced when acknowledging the land verbally.

Background:

Land Acknowledgements have come to be expected in many contexts, especially when a community institution like St. Thomas Public Library is involved. However, land acknowledgments are complex, and it is important that they be well researched, authentic, open to feedback, and include a call to action that ensures that the land acknowledgement is not just a token gesture.

There is no one way to craft a land acknowledgement. If a relationship with a First Nation exists, it might be appropriate to solicit their input and support. If such a relationship does not exist, or is not robust, it is incumbent upon the organization crafting the acknowledgement to do their own research.

In addition, neither a land acknowledgement nor a list of related resources is meant to be static. If new knowledge is unearthed, or if a current event is of relevance, a land acknowledgment should incorporate that new knowledge or reference that current event. Reference lists should be reviewed and updated regularly.

Land Acknowledgment Framework:

We would like to acknowledge that St. Thomas Public Library is built on the traditional territory of the Anishinabek, Haudenosaunee, and Attiwonderonk (Neutral) peoples. This territory is subject to the Upper Canada Treaties (also known as the Upper Canada Land Surrenders). These treaties were signed before Canadian Confederation in 1867. Across this country, other treaties were signed after Confederation, and still others are negotiated to this day.

We would also like to acknowledge our present-day neighbours, the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, the Oneida Nation of the Thames, and the Munsee Delaware Nation. All three communities have histories which extend far beyond their settling in Southwestern Ontario. For more information about the treaties to which our neighbours are signatories, as well as the histories and cultures of all three of our neighbour nations, please consult their websites and Facebook pages.

This acknowledgment is only a starting point. As settlers and/or new Canadians, and as public library workers, we have a responsibility to gather and to share reliable sources of information about the land on which we work today and to make meaningful connections with our First Nations neighbours. We commit to learning more through our own research and are open to hearing from any community members and neighbours (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) who would like to deepen our understanding of this land and its history as well as share their visions for its future.

Thank you.

Resources

Whose land are we on?

Native Land: <https://native-land.ca/>

Whose Land: <https://www.whose.land/en/>

Anishinabek Nation: <https://www.anishinabek.ca/>

Attiwonderonk (Neutral): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neutral_Nation

Haudenosaunee Confederacy: <https://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/who-we-are/>

First Nation Communities in Ontario: <http://communities.knet.ca/>

What treaties are in place here?

Treaties in Ontario: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/treaties> (includes interactive map)

Upper Canada Land Surrenders:

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/upper-canada-land-surrenders>

<https://www.first-nations.info/upper-canada-land-surrenders-1763-1923.html>

What do these treaties mean?

Treaties with Indigenous Peoples in Canada:

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-treaties>

Treaties in Ontario:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/treaties>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/treaties-recognition-week-ontario-1.5351817>

Who are our neighbours?

Chippewas of the Thames First Nation:

<https://www.cottfn.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/OfficialCottfn>

Munsee-Delaware Nation:

<http://www.sfn.s.on.ca/munsee-delaware-nation.html>
<https://www.facebook.com/Munsee-Delaware-Nation-741672379219743/>
Oneida Nation of the Thames:
<https://oneida.on.ca/>
<https://www.facebook.com/OneidaNationoftheThamesAdministration>

What can I do?

10 simple actions you can take to learn more about reconciliation

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/community/personal-acts-reconciliation-1.4687405>

Indigenous Corporate Training: <https://www.ictinc.ca/>

Indigenous Culture Card: <https://clri-ltc.ca/files/2020/02/Indigenous-Culture-Card-v04FINAL.pdf>

Chippewa of the Thames First Nation Statement on Land Acknowledgments
<https://www.cottfn.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Statement-on-Land-Acknowledgements.pdf>

Approved Date: June 15, 2022
Supersedes Date: n/a
Review Date: June 2026
Reference: Board Meeting June 15, 2022