

**Policy Title:** LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT POLICY

**Policy #:** A-106

**Effective Date:** August 5, 2025

**Date adopted by Council:** August 5, 2025



## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Municipality of Jasper respects and acknowledges that the present-day Municipality of Jasper sits on the ancestral and Traditional Territories of Indigenous Peoples.

Through the use of a territorial acknowledgement, the Municipality of Jasper:

- honours the relationship between this land and the Indigenous Peoples that we represent and thrived in this area since time immemorial;
- acknowledges the past and ongoing impacts of the colonization of Indigenous Peoples and lands;
- recognizes the present-day relationship Indigenous Peoples have with this area; and,
- commits to ongoing reconciliation efforts in partnership with those whose Traditional Territory the Municipality of Jasper occupies.

## 2. PURPOSE

“Land Acknowledgements recognize the present-day and historical relationships to land and help build relationships towards a more positive future.” – The Good Relations Toolkit, *Indigenous Tourism Alberta*

The purpose of this policy is to outline an approved approach to the utilization of a Land Acknowledgement within the organization by providing Municipality of Jasper elected officials, staff, volunteers and committee members with:

- a guide for understanding the background, meaning and usage of the statement; and,
- a guide for putting the statement into practice within the bigger picture of reconciliation.

## 3. OBJECTIVES

All employees and representatives of the Municipality of Jasper are expected to be familiar with the Land Acknowledgement Policy and Administrative Procedures and to incorporate the territorial acknowledgement into practice, where appropriate, so as to:

- pay respect to ancestral, traditional and continuing connections to the Territories on which the Municipality of Jasper operates;
- acknowledge the ongoing impacts of colonialization on Indigenous Peoples;
- recognize our role in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 calls to action;
- remain mindful of our collective role as caretakers of this land;
- promote understanding of Indigenous history in this area; and
- build awareness of present-day Indigenous relationships with this area as well as Indigenous culture within the community.

## 4. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

For a territorial acknowledgment to be meaningful, it is important that it is delivered within a bigger picture commitment to reconciliation, with a sense of purpose, meaning and authenticity. It is important to understand that we are all Treaty people and that the signatories to Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 were both Indigenous and non-indigenous.

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Specific wording for the territorial acknowledgement shall be maintained within the administrative procedure associated with this policy and may be updated from time to time as required.

Updates to the territorial acknowledgment shall be communicated to Council and staff via email.

## 5. SCOPE AND USE

A territorial acknowledgement does not need to be done at every meeting and gathering at the Municipality of Jasper. But it should be done when it is meaningful and appropriate.

The acknowledgement is recommended for use at the start of public meetings of Council and at Municipal celebrations and other official events that are either hosted and/or supported by the Municipality. The acknowledgement may appear in email signatures, be printed, spoken, projected, or posted on the Municipality of Jasper website.

A host or emcee of a Municipal event, program or meeting is the person who would do the Land Acknowledgement. A guest may also be asked to do a Land Acknowledgement. It is not expected that any other speaker or presenter would also do one. However, a speaker may choose to, if they wish.

## 6. IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

**Indigenous Worldviews:** this document, in its written form, does not speak to the largely oral worldview of many Indigenous Peoples. It is important to remember that in the building of collaborative relationships, regular, ongoing spoken interactions will carry much more meaning.

**Terms:** The Municipality of Jasper recognizes that various terms may be preferred over others, and that preferred terms can change over time. The Municipality's practice will be to honour Indigenous Peoples utilizing the terms they wish to be identified with.

**Continuous Improvement:** The Municipality of Jasper is learning about the rich and complex histories of Indigenous Peoples in this area and is continuously working to refine how the organization can best acknowledge these histories and present-day realities in a truthful and authentic way. It is understood that this is a living document that will continue to evolve over time as the Municipality is engaged in ongoing learning and education about reconciliation.

## 7. DEFINITIONS

**Colonization:** The action or process of settling among and establishing control over the Indigenous people of an area. Settler colonialism in Canada is this process and the consequences of the colonization of the lands of the Indigenous people already present at first contact. As colonization progressed in Canada, the Indigenous peoples went through forced displacement, genocide as well as assimilation.

**Indigenous Peoples:** Indigenous Peoples are defined in international or national legislation as having a specific set of rights based on their historical ties to a particular territory, and their cultural or historical distinctiveness from other populations that are often politically and culturally

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dominant. Across the lands that are now occupied by the nation we call Canada, Indigenous Peoples are defined to include First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples.

**Public Meeting:** means a meeting of Council or committee of the whole at which members of the public may attend and may be invited to make submissions to Council, but which is not a public hearing.

**Reconciliation:** Reconciliation is about addressing past and present wrongs committed against Indigenous Peoples, making amends, and improving relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to create a better future for all.

**Territorial Acknowledgement:** Acknowledging territory means presenting a verbal or written statement that communicates recognition and respect for Indigenous Peoples, their histories and their distinct and unique connections to the land. It is recognition of their presence both in the past and in the present. It may reflect a Treaty or may be expressed as “unceded” where no Treaty exists.

**Traditional Territory:** the geographic area identified by Indigenous Peoples as the area of land to which they currently have a connection and/or to which their ancestors traditionally cared for, travelled through, utilized, protected and/or valued. A Traditional Territory is often illustrated on a map but can also be described orally through story or language.

**Treaties:** Treaties are agreements made between the Government of Canada or the Crown, Indigenous groups and often provinces and territories that define ongoing rights and obligations on all sides.

These agreements set out continuing treaty rights and benefits for each group. Treaty rights and Aboriginal rights (commonly referred to as Indigenous rights) are recognized and affirmed in Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 and are also a key part of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which the Government of Canada has committed to adopt (Government of Canada, 2020). Treaties can include both historic and modern treaties and comprehensive land claim agreements with Indigenous groups.

## **8. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **All Staff**

Read and understand the Land Acknowledgement Policy and Administrative Procedures.

### **Directors and Managers**

- Ensure that all staff read and are oriented to the Land Acknowledgement Policy and Administrative Procedures.
- Make a shared commitment to role-model purposeful and authentic reconciliation efforts for the rest of the organization.
- Support and promote opportunities for staff to engage in training on reconciliation.

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**Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)**

- Ensure that the Senior Leadership Team read, sign off on and are oriented to and utilizing the Land Acknowledgement Policy and Administrative Procedures.
- Support and promote opportunities for the Senior Leadership Team to engage in training on reconciliation.

**Council**

- Include the Land Acknowledgement Policy and Administrative Procedures in elected official orientations and training.
- Ensure that Municipality of Jasper senior leadership team are utilizing the Land Acknowledgement Policy and Procedures in organizational functions and objectives.
- Support and promote opportunities for the CAO and Senior Leadership Team to engage in training on reconciliation.
- Review the policy and approve changes as required.

**9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This policy has been developed in consultation with community and Indigenous partners including: Parks Canada – Indigenous Relations, Indigenous Tourism Alberta, members of the Indigenous Peoples' Circle of Jasper, local Indigenous entrepreneurs and those who identify a historical and ongoing connection to this area. The Municipality of Jasper is thankful for their willingness to share their knowledge.