

Honoring MMIWG2S+



Called to Justice through Action

ISAN- May 2025

Introduction: The Urgency & Our Purpose

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Honouring Lives, Demanding Justice

- Acknowledging the ongoing national crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit, LGBTQQIA+ People (MMIWG2S+).
- This is not just a national issue; it affects communities everywhere, including ours.
- Our Purpose Today: To request the City of Woodstock's partnership in recognizing this crisis and supporting local commemoration efforts, starting with May 5th (Red Dress Day).



Why Commemoration Matters:

May 5th & Memorials

Remembering, Healing, Educating

- May 5th (Red Dress Day): A national day of awareness initiated by Métis artist Jaime Black. Red dresses symbolize the stolen lives of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Memorials & Events:

- Provide space for families and communities to grieve and honour loved ones.
- Raise public awareness and educate the community.
- Stand as a visible commitment to ending the violence.
- Are vital steps in the journey of truth and reconciliation.



The MMIWG2S+ Crisis

Current Statistics:

Indigenous Women & Girls account for 16% of all female homicide victims, and 11% of missing women

Indigenous women are 12 times more likely to or go missing than any other woman in Canada

Six in ten Indigenous women have experience physical assault, and 50% of Indigenous women have experienced sexual assault

50% of human trafficking victims are Indigenous

Native Womens Association of Canada Case Study Example (out of 582 cases in 2010 NWAC study)

- ★ 67% are murder cases (death as the result of homicide or negligence);
- ★ 20% are cases of missing women or girls;
- ★ 4% are cases of suspicious death—deaths regarded as natural or accidental by police, but considered suspicious by family or community members; and
- ★ 9% are cases where the nature of the case is unknown—it is unclear whether the woman was murdered, is missing or died in suspicious circumstances.

The MMIW Final Report, *Reclaiming our Power and Place*, clearly outlines the abuses committed and condoned by that Canadian state and social institutions that have resulted in the systemic oppression, genocide and the violation/denial of security, safety and human dignity.

Key Findings of the MMIW Final Report:

- Systemic violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people
- Human rights violations
- Lack of accountability
- Undermining Indigenous Governance
- Insufficient Funding

Systemic issues contributing to disproportionate rates of femicide and human trafficking for BIPOC and 2SLGBTQIA+ people can be broken down into four pathways to violence including: ***Multigenerational and Intergenerational Trauma, Social and Economic Marginalization, Maintaining the Status Quo and Institutional Lack of Will, Ignoring the Agency¹ of Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People***

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The Foundation: National Inquiry's Calls for Justice

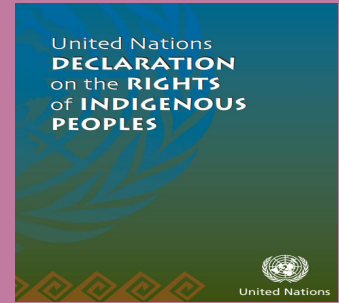
A Clear Mandate for Action

The Path Forward: Implementing the Calls to Justice

- The National Inquiry into MMIWG (Final Report 2019) confirmed this crisis constitutes a genocide.
- **Call for Justice 1.1: Explicitly calls upon ALL levels of government – Federal, Provincial, Territorial, Municipal, and Indigenous – to implement the Calls for Justice.**



Grounded in Rights: UNDRIP: Upholding Indigenous Rights



The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) provides a framework for justice and reconciliation (Adopted by Canada).

Key Rights Supporting Our Request:

Art. 2: Freedom from Discrimination

Art. 7: Right to Life, Security, Physical & Mental Integrity

Art. 11: Right to Practice Culture (incl. ceremonies, memorials)

Art. 15: Right to Dignity & Culture reflected in public information (proclamations)

Art. 22: States must take measures with Indigenous peoples to protect women & children from violence.

Guided by Reconciliation: TRC Calls to Action

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action



Reconciliation Requires Action

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) laid out steps for reconciliation in Canada.

Relevant Calls to Action for Municipalities:

#43: Calls on municipal governments to fully adopt and implement UNDRIP as the framework for reconciliation.

#57: Calls on municipal governments to educate public servants on Indigenous history, UNDRIP, Treaties, etc.

Principles of #79 & #80: Support for developing commemoration (memorials, monuments) and establishing dedicated days of remembrance

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Woodstock's Role: Local Action, National Impact: Reconciliation in Our Community



- UNDRIP, TRC Calls to Action (#43), and MMIWG Calls for Justice (#1.1) establish a clear role for Woodstock Town Council.
- Addressing the MMIWG2S+ crisis locally is a tangible act of reconciliation.
- Supporting Indigenous-led initiatives honours self-determination (UNDRIP Art. 3).
- Proclaiming May 5th and supporting memorials demonstrates Woodstock's commitment to the safety and well-being of *all* its residents and neighbours.

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Our Request to Woodstock Town Council: A Call for Partnership & Commitment

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We respectfully request the City of Woodstock to:

- **1. Issue a Proclamation:** Officially recognize May 5th annually as the "National Day of Awareness for MMIWG / Red Dress Day" in Woodstock.
- **2. Commit to Partnership:** Actively support and participate in the May 5th memorial event organized by ISAN and commit to ongoing collaboration on addressing the MMIWG2S+ crisis locally.
- **3. Embrace Active Reconciliation:** Continue to build relationships and engage meaningfully with local Indigenous communities and organizations.
- **4. Facilitate Access as Reconciliation:** Develop a clear and accessible process for Indigenous organizations to request the use of City-owned spaces (e.g., parks, community centres) free of charge for cultural events, commemoration, gatherings, and reconciliation-focused activities, recognizing this as a tangible act of reconciliation. This approach aligns with actions taken by neighbouring municipalities, such as the City of Kitchener, Town of Ingersoll, and the Region of Waterloo, which waive fees to support Indigenous cultural practices and reconciliation.

Moving Forward Together: Building a Safer, More Just Community

Addressing this crisis and walking the path of reconciliation requires everyone.

Council's support sends a vital message of solidarity, respect, and commitment.

We invite you to partner with us in honouring the lives lost, supporting survivors and families, and working towards ending this violence.

Miigwech, Thank you, Merci, for your consideration and time.

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Further Learning



CALLS TO JUSTICE-

https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Calls_for_Justice.pdf

MMIW FINAL REPORT-

<https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

WHAT THEIR STORIES TELL US NWAC-

https://nwac.ca/assets-knowledge-centre/2010_What_Their_Stories_Tell_Us_Research_Findings_SIS_Initiative-1.pdf

NWAC Fact Sheet-

https://www.nwac.ca/assets-knowledge-centre/Fact_Sheet_Missing_and_Murdered_Aboriginal_Women_and_Girls.pdf

TRC Calls to Action-

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf

Decolonizing Trauma Work- Indigenous Stories and Strategies by Renee Linklater