



**ACCESS BARRIE  
MEMORANDUM**

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Canada Day  
Pending #:

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**TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**FROM: R. JAMES-REID, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ACCESS BARRIE  
S. LEE-YOUNG, MANAGER OF RECREATION PROGRAMS**

**NOTED: R. BELL, DIRECTOR OF RECREATION AND CULTURE  
D. MCALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES  
M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

**RE: SUGGESTION TO “CANCEL CANADA DAY”**

**DATE: JUNE 28, 2021**

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The purpose of this Memorandum is to notify Council that [a suggestion to “Cancel Canada Day”](#) was posted on the City’s suggestion forum on Wednesday evening. It has passed the 500-vote threshold and is therefore now classified as Under Review. Staff are also providing information regarding the planned activities as part of Canada Day.

The [approved process for ideas reaching Under Review status](#) includes a memo to City Council, to be placed on the circulation list. The memo also typically outlines ways to implement the suggestion. Due to the time sensitive nature of this suggestion, staff are advising of actions that have been taken related to the suggestion.

The full text of the [suggestion](#) is copied/pasted below:

***Cancel Canada Day***

On Thursday, May 27, the Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation confirmed that the remains of 215 Indigenous children were found buried in an unmarked mass grave at the Kamloops Residential School. Following this announcement, and subsequent announcements of unmarked mass graves of Indigenous children, multiple municipalities across Canada have announced the cancellation of Canada Day events. This includes at least 14 municipalities in 6 provinces and territories.

This decision has been made out of respect for Indigenous families and communities who have had loved ones stolen from them as well as survivors of these ‘schools.’ It has also been made in recognition of the historic and ongoing colonial violence and injustices enacted against Indigenous peoples by the Canadian state.

Barrie City Council should follow the lead of other municipalities by doing the same: cancelling plans, and working with local nations and peoples to find alternatives this year and in years to come.

To that effect, Council should pass the following motion, similar to one passed in Victoria, British Columbia:

That Council direct staff to put on hold any announced plans for Canada Day 2021 and do nothing further with respect to July 1st events this year; and

That the City work with partners as Beausoleil First Nation, Rama First Nation, Georgina Island First Nation, and other local First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and organizations to explore and implement alternatives to the July 1st 'celebrations' to be held virtually and/or in-person, as public health measures allow, by September 30 (Orange Shirt Day); and

That the City engage in ongoing work with these nations, communities, and organizations to explore and implement alternatives on an annual basis, including but not limited to: local oral histories and cultural celebrations; the history of Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, and Millennial Scoop; and any other alternatives recommended.

This is by no means the end of the work that must be done, the truths that must be learned, understood, and shared. It is, however, a start.

#### Canada Day activities

As part of the planning process for an appropriate, informative and respectful recognition of National Indigenous Peoples Day, the Special Events Team engaged representatives of Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin Primary Care Team from the Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle. During those discussions, they also discussed recognition of Canada Day.

The Team had subsequent discussions with the Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin Primary Care Team to obtain further feedback related to an acknowledgement of Canada Day in a manner that is respectful.

The theme of this year's Canada Day website and activities have been updated to remove the red and white celebration theme. The updated theme will be reflective of our shared history, with a focus on education, reconciliation, and reflection.

The City's Canada Day webpage will provide extensive resources that celebrate the heritage, diverse cultures, and significant contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. It also includes a link to the Barrie Public Library virtual hub that contains resources and programming include reading recommendations for both adults and children, book chats, family activities and storytime, National Film Board short film screenings, mental health and wellness resources, and more.

Virtual programming for Canada Day includes videos that were recorded to showcase Indigenous heritage and culture for National Indigenous Peoples Day.

The lights at Meridian Place and the Five Points Theatre presented by Pratt Homes & Pratt Development will remain orange on July 1<sup>st</sup> in support of residential school survivors, their families and Indigenous communities across Canada.

In partnership with Red Quills and Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin Primary Care Team, a sacred fire at the Spirit Catcher is being planned for July 1<sup>st</sup>, subject to health restrictions.

Additional details regarding Canada Day activities will be provided in the days leading up to July 1<sup>st</sup>.