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## Milton Public Library Implements 12 Calls to Action on the Journey to Reconciliation

In its continued effort towards Truth & Reconciliation, **Milton Public Library** (MPL) implements yet another equity leading, decolonising action with the adoption of 12 Calls to Action from the “[A Journey to ReconciliAction](#)” report released by the **Hamilton Community Legal Clinic**.

The “A Journey to ReconciliAction” report interprets recommendations within the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#) (TRC) that can be undertaken by organisations at a local level, a key aim of Milton Public Library. The recommendations provide a thoughtful path to support the decolonisation process and be actions for change within the community.

“I am delighted to be able to share that once again, Milton Public Library continues to lead the community in efforts to decolonise our places and spaces including within our own policies, procedures, programmes and people, states **Mark Williams**, CEO and Chief Librarian of MPL. As such, MPL is pleased to announce the adoption of the 12 Calls to Action outlined in the “A Journey to ReconciliAction” report to continue to inspire positive community change towards Indigenisation. These 12 Calls to Action are just the first in many steps that MPL will take to build lasting reconciliation, healing, and cooperative relations with the Indigenous communities of Milton.”

A hive relationship between [Grandmother’s Voice](#) and MPL has developed into a connection with **NaWalka Geeshy Meegwun** (**Lyndon George** — Anishnaabe Ojokwe) of Hamilton Community Legal Clinic. Recently, Lyndon facilitated an intimate workshop at the Main Library focused on land acknowledgment, where participants experienced a smudge ceremony and were challenged with the Calls to Action from the TRC report. “It is encouraging to see Milton Public Library moving forward with implementing some of the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report in the work that it does, said George. This is a strong movement forward and I am pleased the Milton Public Library also acknowledges that there is still much more work to do and has committed to walking this new journey.”

With the support of Lyndon George and Grandmother's Voice, MPL has been able to identify these first 12 Calls to Action in which the Library can move forward on these recommendations contained within the TRC.

**The first 12 Calls to Action for MPL are:**

1. Adopt the TRC and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as its reconciliation framework
2. Provide written public materials in Indigenous languages
3. Update phone system to include Indigenous language learning snippets while on hold
4. Support Indigenous patrons and staff to identify themselves in their traditional name
5. Ensure training on Indigeneity for all staff and Board members
6. Advertise job postings through Indigenous networks, spaces, and organizations (HR)
7. Encourage Indigenous applicants to apply in all job postings (HR)
8. Create flexible interview process focused on assessing Indigenous person's qualifications in a culturally competent manner (HR)
9. Review Collective Agreement and Policy to ensure they reflect Indigenous family structure, cultural practice, connection to land, community, culture, and self (HR)
10. Ensure full acceptance of sick notes from traditional healers (HR)
11. Ensure flexibility with regards to bereavement leave for Indigenous staff (HR)
12. Recognize and support National Indigenous Peoples Day – June 21st

MPL's Chief Diversity Officer, **Lakhdeep Dhaliwal**, beautifully summarises the journey being taken by the library. "Before we can reconcile, we must centre the truth. For too long, a failure to centre the truth has resulted in numerous acts of reconciliation that fail, fizzle out, and often result in more harm done. The truth is this – First People are Beautiful People. This truth must be experienced first-hand and this truth must be shared with everyone.

The 12 Calls to Action from the Hamilton Community Legal Clinic helps bring Milton Public Library one step closer to walking the talk of Truth and Reconciliation, at a local level - a key driver for MPL's Chief Librarian. The report entitled "A Journey to ReconciliAction" does not condone nor adopt pan-Indigenous approaches to First People. Rather, the report primarily focuses on laws and traditions from the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Metis communities which we serve.

The report is an opportunity to reflect on organisational structure, service, community and projects at Milton Public Library. More than a checklist, this report lays the foundation for reconciliation with a particular emphasis on the Indigenisation of space, policy and procedure as well as people at MPL."

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### **About Hamilton Community Legal Clinic:**

The Hamilton Community Legal Clinic (HCLC) is a non-profit community legal clinic serving low income residents of Hamilton. In addition to providing individual poverty law services including legal advice and referrals and legal representation, the Clinic is involved in public legal education, community development and law reform.

In 2013, the HCLC established YÉN:TENE (Mohawk for “you and I will go there together”), an Indigenous justice initiative that strives to build relationships between the Clinic and the Indigenous community. YÉN:TENE is guided by an Indigenous Advisory Committee comprised of members of the Indigenous community and friends and allies.

### **About Grandmother’s Voice:**

Grandmothers are the original Earth Walkers who guide, direct, model, and protect culture for the coming faces. Grandmothers have preserved the core principles of peace, power and righteousness. They strengthen communities and nations through reclaiming identity, rebuilding relationships and remembering our Original Instructions. Resurgence in Indigenous Ways of Knowing is our pathway to healing as a community and nation. Reclaiming, restoring culture, land, language, holistic health and well-being is the pathway to self-determination.

### **About MPL:**

Serving one of the fastest-growing municipalities in North America, Milton Public Library (MPL) is a multi-award winning public library system focused on innovation and service excellence. The Library’s updated service delivery model is founded on community-led concepts and partnerships and has been highly effective, to the point that MPL continues to have the highest rate of active cardholders of any large Canadian Library (70% of residents are active members!).

MPL empowers the community to Read. Learn. Create. Connect. and **Be Inspired** by all MPL has to offer.

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