

Standing in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples

We stand in solidarity and grief with Indigenous communities across Canada. They are mourning the ongoing discovery of hundreds of unmarked graves of missing Indigenous children at former residential school sites. Their collective understandings about the dark truths of Canada's past – and present – are being publicly validated. Survivors, families and communities are continually triggered and traumatized.

These horrifying discoveries confirm what Indigenous communities have long asserted about our country's history of colonialism, and the efforts of the Canadian government to assimilate Indigenous peoples through the implementation of residential schools, resulting in cultural genocide. This is a shameful policy and period that lives on in the hearts and minds of Indigenous peoples and practices of Canadian institutions. Canadians are waking up to the magnitude of these actions, and are no longer able to ignore these truths.

Our nation would not be facing this truth today without the resilience and resolve of the Indigenous community - in spite of systemic racism, endless tragedy and countless setbacks. First Nation communities, such as we have seen with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and Cowessess, are done waiting, and are taking the painful steps alone to locate their missing children and bring them home.

However, there is more truth to be uncovered, and significant action required to improve Indigenous communities and the lives of Indigenous people. This long overdue action includes clean drinking water, livable housing, equitable education facilities and quality health services. This will require the collective support of the entire country and all levels of government. (Please read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action Report.)

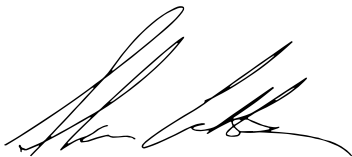
In a show of support of the Indigenous community during this difficult time, we are creating space from June 26 through July 1 for mourning, understanding, education and action by Ajax residents.

We have ordered all flags at Town facilities lowered, requested that our corporate social media channels go silent, and created a webpage featuring the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Indigenous learning resources and ways residents can support Indigenous communities.

Further, on behalf of the residents of Ajax, the Town will be donating a total of \$5,000 to three organizations, including Water First (\$3,000), Indian Residential School Survivor Society (\$1,000) and Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services (\$1,000) to show our collective support as a community.

While we know the work of reconciliation is much more than pausing social media or wearing a ribbon, we wanted to ensure we created space to inform, impact and inspire residents to support Indigenous communities.

The recent events have sparked a profound interest in the physical, emotional and mental well-being of the Indigenous community. It is important we act on this concern. We must not turn inward and continue to ignore our past, but instead, use our voices to bring every lost Indigenous child home and strongly advocate for the 94 Calls to Action to be implemented.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shaun Collier".**Shaun Collier**Mayor & CEO - Town of Ajax
Town of AjaxA handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marilyn Crawford".**Marilyn Crawford**Regional Councillor - Ward 1
Town of AjaxA handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sterling Lee".**Sterling Lee**Regional Councillor - Ward 2
Town of AjaxA handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joanne Dies".**Joanne Dies**Regional Councillor - Ward 3
Town of AjaxA handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Tyler-Morin".**Rob Tyler-Morin**Councillor - Ward 1
Town of AjaxA handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashmeed Khan".**Ashmeed Khan**Councillor - Ward 2
Town of AjaxA handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Bower".**Lisa Bower**Councillor - Ward 3
Town of Ajax