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TAMRMS#: B05

INFORMATION REQUEST (IR) - Indigenous Cemetery Recognition

Requested by: Councillor Killick

Date of Request: July 2, 2025

Date Response Due: August 1, 2025

Confidential Response: No

QUESTION

Please advise what would be required to establish a standardized annual date and formal recognition ceremony of the Indigenous persons buried in the Indigenous Cemetery at the St Albert Cemetery, this could be the date the Cairn was originally dedicated June 20 1990 (or determined with additional Indigenous consultation). This info will be used to inform a NOM.

RESPONSE

The Indigenous Cemetery is located in the southeast portion of the St. Albert Municipal Cemetery. The 98 Indigenous Charles Camsell Hospital patients from the Northwest Territories, Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, were buried here between 1946 and 1969. This portion of the cemetery was originally acquired in 1920 by the Federal Government; in 1971, it was transferred to the Province and then to the City of St. Albert in 1979.

As part of this transfer, the City was obligated to “restore and maintain” the area. As part of the restoration processes, existing burial markers and wooden crosses, which once stood to honour the Charles Camsell Hospital patients buried here, were removed, and the area was landscaped.

On June 22, 1990, a service was held to dedicate the memorial cairn to those 98 individuals interred here.

Since 2022, the City has worked with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation’s Nanilavut Initiative, a project working to locate burials of Inuit who passed away after being sent to various healthcare facilities, such as the Charles Camsell Hospital during the 1940s-1960s tuberculosis epidemic.

Most recently, a memorial service was held on June 24th and 25th by the initiative, with support from Public Operations and Government/Indigenous Relations and Environment at the City. From this perspective, the City has not led the development of a standardized event on an annual basis but has worked with the Nanilavut Initiative on a request-by-request basis.

To support responding to this Information Request, City Administration sought feedback from the Indigenous Burial Sites Working Group and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and has not received a response by the deadline for this Information Request.

From a logistics perspective, several City branches/departments (Cemetery Services , Community Services, and Government/Indigenous Relations and Environment) could jointly work to enable an annual recognition event at the cemetery, if directed by Council. An annual event could be seen as an increase in Level of Service that would need to be balanced with existing Levels of Service for maintenance and operation of other city infrastructure and facilities.

A recognition event would include:

- Confirming date(s) with Indigenous Partners;
- Ensuring grounds are groomed and ready;
- Ensuring no other internments are scheduled for the date(s); the implication of dedicating an annual day or two for such an event is that potential City of St. Albert interments would not be accommodated on the same day and would have to be scheduled accordingly either before or after the dedicated event;
- Providing support equipment to facilitate the event (i.e. chairs, tables, tents, etc.)
- Liaising with appropriate Indigenous Partners to provide advice and guidance on the scope of the event

Report Date: August 1, 2025

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