

CO-24-41

From: Christeen Thornton <M.F.I.P.P.A. Sec 14(1)>
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2024 8:59 AM
To: clerks <clerks@oshawa.ca>; Brian Nicholson <BNicholson@oshawa.ca>
Subject: A Suggestion for Broadbent Park

Good morning,

I wanted to suggest adding a handful of educational plaques to Ed Broadbent Park. Since it opened, I've seen an incredible amount of wildlife, from native insects to herons. With all the events planned there, it's a great opportunity to Ed-ucate people (sorry, had to!) on our native fauna.

For more effectiveness, the plaques could be centered around the Seven Grandfather Teachings, with English and French text on the signage, and translations in Anishinaabemowin.

We have a number of plaques in the area of Lakeview Park dedicated to the settlers there, so I think this would be a welcome addition. I have attached an example photo of a plaque in Toronto that might be more cost-effective than the typical embossed bronze ones.

Perhaps we could do one per year to keep it truly affordable? There are also numerous Indigenous elders around who could lend advice on the phrasing. But for now:

Humility – Dbaadendiziwin is symbolized by the wolf. Eastern wolves have been extirpated from Oshawa, but it was once part of their historic range. We can remember them when we hear the coyotes yip-yip-yip at nighttime across the fields. They remind us to live life selflessly.

Bravery – Aakwa'ode'ewin is symbolized by the bear. In North Oshawa, we still see bears; they would have come to the mouth of the Oshawa Creek to feed on the spawning salmon that used to swim up the streams and rivers in the hundreds of thousands. When we see or think of a bear, we are reminded of the importance of being brave in the face of adversity and how it is okay to sometimes have to do important things while scared.

Honesty – Gwekwaadziwin is represented by the raven. Traditionally, the raven uses what he has and doesn't try to take more than what he deserves, and never deceives others for his personal gain. He is a reminder that we should not take what we want from nature, but only what we need. Ravens are a common sight around Broadbent Park, sometimes found hop-hop-hopping towards a snack!

Wisdom – Nbwaakaawin is represented by the beaver, a well-loved symbol of Canada. The beaver is so powerful that she can make entire lakes with her dams and can take them away if she leaves. Beavers are known to live in Oshawa's creeks and may have been hunted here as part of the Europeans' demand for their pelts. She reminds us that to live life fully is to stay present and grounded in the Teachings of our ancestors.

Truth – Debwewin is represented by the turtle. The turtle carries all of life's teachings on his back, and all of us too, here on Turtle Island. The turtle is a reminder that truthfulness is the only way forward and that we must be steadfast in our morals. Oshawa is home to many kinds of turtles: box turtles, snapping turtles, and more! Some of them can live so long that they begin to grow plants on their shells, like little swimming islands!

Respect – Mnaadendimowin is symbolized by the buffalo. According to traditional Teachings, the buffalo gave himself to the people out of respect for the balance of all living things, including people. He is a reminder that we are part of a broad ecosystem, and that we too must have respect for all living things to keep the ecosystem healthy. The Oshawa Creek is a vital part of Ontario's ecosystem; while buffalo may not have roamed here, the Teaching is still important. When the ecosystem is out of balance, all beings suffer.

Love – Zaagidwin is symbolized by the eagle flying above the ground, keeping watch. They are sacred because they can fly so high that they can speak to the Creator, and they are so strong that they can carry all of the Teachings. The eagle reminds us that to know love is to know peace. Eagles sometimes fly over Oshawa as they seek nesting grounds. When we see them, we can think about the love we have been given, and all the love we have to give!

Thank you for taking the time to read my suggestion,

Christeen Thornton