

RE: SF-25-16 -Amendments to Open Air Burning By-law 73-2012 related to Sacred Fires

To Members of the Safety and Facilities Committee,

As a First Nations resident of Oshawa, I see this as an important change to allow all Indigenous residents to be able to have Sacred Fires for our ceremonies. Making it clear within the by-law that Sacred Fires are exempt highlights the City of Oshawa's commitment to reconciliation.

However, after doing some brief research, many other municipalities do not have this exemption within their open-air burning by-laws. Looking only at Durham, no municipality has this exemption (Pickering does not have a by-law, only relying on the Ontario Fire Code). I looked a Few other municipalities (London, Hamilton, and North Bay) and did not find this exemption. The only municipality I found to have this exemption was my hometown of Sault Ste. Marie. I don't know if staff reviewed other municipalities for this exemption and could possibly provide a better idea of if it is common or uncommon for this exemption to exist.

To take this one step further and encourage other municipalities to have similar exemptions, I encourage the following (or similar) be added to the motion:

That this resolution be circulated to all municipalities in Ontario encouraging they
Pass similar exemptions to support reconciliation.

By doing this, the City of Oshawa would not only be furthering reconciliation in our city, but across the whole province, encouraging other municipalities to look at their open-air burning by-laws.

I thank the City of Oshawa for proposing this important amendment and hope that this learning can be shared with all Ontario municipalities to support reconciliation not only in Oshawa, but all of Ontario.

Kind regards,

Noah Edwards

Ward 4