

Responsibility of the AOLS

As members and staff of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors, it is important to understand the long-standing history that has brought us to live or work on the traditional lands and territories of First Nations or Indigenous Peoples.

What is a Land Acknowledgement?

A Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes that we are here on the land of First Nations or Indigenous Peoples and that we respect the unique and enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. It has been a custom for Indigenous peoples to acknowledge the land at the start of their gatherings, ceremonies, and events. With the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, more non-Indigenous people are becoming aware of the importance of a land acknowledgement.

AOLS OBJECTIVES OF A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT POLICY

The AOLS supports the practices of land acknowledgements in order to:

- Recognize the role that surveyors played in settlement on Indigenous lands and acknowledge the detrimental impacts that colonization has on Indigenous communities.
- Acknowledge our presence on the land as settlers and as a part of colonial history.
- Give guidance to AOLS members and staff on how to publicly acknowledge the territorial lands and treaties in a way that shows respect towards and recognition of Indigenous Peoples when they are holding AOLS sanctioned meetings or giving presentations on behalf of the AOLS at other locations.
- Encourage self-reflection and promote cultural competency of members, staff and volunteers towards the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

This policy applies to any AOLS-related location including, but not limited to:

- the AOLS office;
- member or staff presentations outside of the office;
- annual conferences, meetings, regional group meetings and training held under the authority of the AOLS.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

- The AOLS will publish a Land Acknowledgement on the AOLS website.
- The AOLS will ensure that all members and staff of the AOLS are educated on the content and the scope of this policy.
- The AOLS will use a Land Acknowledgement at the outset of all Council, AGM meetings, and webinars and is strongly recommended at all regional groups and committee meetings.

Land Acknowledgement of the site of the AOLS office to be published on the AOLS website.

The Association of Ontario Land Surveyors acknowledges that its office at 1043 McNicoll Avenue in Scarborough is situated on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples. Ontario Land Surveyors also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

Reference:

1. <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accessibility-human-rights/indigenous-affairs-office/land-acknowledgement/>
2. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/map-ontario-treaties-and-reserves>
3. <https://ofl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017.05.31-Traditional-Territory-Acknowledgement-in-Ont.pdf>

Generic Land Acknowledgement

The following generic Land Acknowledgement is offered for use. Meeting chairs are encouraged to customize this as need be depending on location and circumstances.

The Committee acknowledges that we are gathered on the ancestral lands and waters of all Indigenous Peoples who have left their mark. We respectfully acknowledge those that came before us, those that are here, and those yet to come. May we all continue to serve as stewards of the Earth.