

From: [Kathy Lawson](#) on behalf of [Town](#)
To: [Lisa Slomke](#)
Subject: FW: Colonization road
Date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 9:47:38 AM

fyi

Best regards,

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From: Brad Fyfe <bjfyfe@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 5:14 PM
To: Town <town@fortfrances.ca>
Subject: Colonization road

Colonization Road

Boozhoo nindinawemaaganag. Zaagategaabo nindigoo. Wazhazhk nindoodem. Mitaanjigamiing nindoonji.

A few days ago, as I read comments on Facebook about the possible name change of Colonization Road, I was utterly disgusted at the number of ignorant remarks. So, I decided to ask Siri what the definition of colonization was. Siri answered that colonization is “the action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area.”

That it is 2020 and Fort Frances still has a street named to commemorate that concept is absurd, and deeply hurtful.

I have heard arguments opposed to changing the name that “it will cost too much”, that “it is a lot of work”, and that “if we change the name we are erasing history”, but people have come forward and have been willing to pay for the cost of the name change, and others have volunteered to help the elderly to change their address. Canada Post has also stated that it will give everyone impacted a free mail-forwarding service for a year.

So, what’s the real issue here? As someone who has endured intergenerational trauma as a direct result of my mother being taken from her home and adopted during the sixties scoop, and my grandmother and great aunts being murdered – with no justice being served – driving by a sign that celebrates ‘colonization’ is a constant slap in the face.

Indigenous people cannot just “get over it” or “just leave it alone”. Would you tell a survivor of the Holocaust to “just get over it”? Put yourself in the shoes of one of the residential school survivors

who were ripped away from their families and forced to go to a school where they were beaten for speaking their language. Many were physically, emotionally, spiritually, and in many cases sexually abused – all in the name of a Lord and saviour who “loved” them. These events occurred as part of colonization, and those wounds have yet to heal. Indigenous people are reminded of these atrocities every time they drive down Colonization Road.

To me, ‘colonization’ means more than taking control over the local Indigenous population. It means taking away their language, culture, spirituality, traditional governance, and family structures. It means genocide.

In 2019, I had the opportunity to take part of a ceremony where the Town of Fort Frances and the Agency One First Nation communities (Mitaanjugamiing, Couchiching, Nigigoonsiminikaaning, and Naicatchewenin) came to an agreement to work together and maintain a good relationship for the benefit of the point park.

I commend Mayor June Caul Councillor Doug Judson and the rest of town council on the work they have done to mend a relationship that has been full of ups and downs but I believe this is the first real step in proving they meant what they said.

I encourage everyone to be vocal and share their opinions no matter what side of the fence you are on about the name change. But please be good neighbours and keep things respectful and peaceful. Canada is watching. Let’s do the right thing and lead the way in reconciliation.

Zaagategaabo, Brad Fyfe
He/Him/His
Local First Nation Resident