



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 1, 2021

Canada Day Message From Mayor Virginia Hackson

On behalf of East Gwillimbury Council, I would like to recognize and acknowledge Canada Day a bit differently this year.

Canada Day is a national holiday dating back to 1867 when Canada officially became a country. It is something we typically celebrate with pride and patriotism. However, this year we are confronted with a national truth, and a tragedy affecting our entire country. Tragedies that not only affect Indigenous Peoples but also other communities such as the recent Islamophobic attack in London, Ontario. We are saddened, angered, and dismayed by these actions and at the discoveries of unmarked graves at former residential schools. There are no words to describe the pain being felt across the country right now and I offer our deepest condolences.

There has been much public debate in the weeks leading up to Canada Day related to whether or not Canada Day should be recognized this year. As a municipality – part of our responsibility is to bring people together to build our community. It's important to do so in times of celebration, but it's even more important that we come together in times of tragedy. Today, while we recognize the country that we all call home, we also honour those who have suffered as a result of governance and laws that enabled a system that we simply can't comprehend. We need to celebrate and honour people for their individuality and for who they are, ensuring no one is left behind.

As a Council, we are committed to continuing our work on creating a diverse and inclusive community where everyone is accepted and welcome. We must all look to create a better and brighter future, for us and for the generations to follow. We must stand united, as together we are stronger, and we can do better to make Canada the country we want it to be.

Mayor Virginia Hackson