



MEETING NOTICE

I.D.E.A. ADVISORY COMMITTEE
September 15, 2025 - 6:00 PM
Tualatin Library, 18878 SW Martinazzi Ave.

Virtual Meeting Access:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85229233760>
Passcode: 721349

A. CALL TO ORDER (6:10 PM)

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

C. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Co-Chairs
2. Council Liaison
3. Staff
4. Public

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Gathering Places
2. Urban Renewal: Core Opportunity Reinvestment Area

E. OLD BUSINESS

1. Acknowledgement of Native Land and People

F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Community Groups

G. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

H. ADJOURNMENT

All meetings of the Committee are open to the public. This meeting location is accessible to person with disabilities. To request accommodations, please contact Jerianne Thompson, Library Director, at jthompson@tualatin.gov or 503-691-3063 at least 36 hours prior to the meeting.

For those wishing to provide comment during the meeting, there is one opportunity on the agenda: Public Communications. Written statements may be sent in advance to Library Director Jerianne Thompson no later than 5pm on September 15, 2025.



IDEA ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

August 18, 2025

Present: Sunni Case Armstrong, Kelsea Ashenbrenner, Chris Paul, Gerry Preston, Cosi Slider, Erinn Stimson, Councilor Christen Sacco

Absent: Kolini Fusitu'a, Evelin Hooper, Winnie Lo, Rebekah Morgan, BJ Park

Public: Waamichu Adamo

Staff: Jerianne Thompson, Library Director / Equity & Inclusion Officer
Betsy Rodriguez Ruef, Community Engagement Coordinator
Jill Coleman, City Manager's Office Intern

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chris Paul called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chris Paul called for any corrections to the July minutes. Sunni Armstrong moved to accept the July 2025 meeting minutes; Cosi Slider seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

C. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Co-Chairs: Chris Paul said the Pride Concert had a great turnout, and he thanked Sunni Armstrong for her organizing efforts.

2. Council Liaison: Councilor Christen Sacco shared information about the Safe Parking Program presentation recently delivered to Tualatin City Council.

3. Staff: Jerianne Thompson shared information about the recent Executive Order by the Portland Mayor requiring the City of Portland to adjust any programs or policies at risk of violating federal anti-discrimination laws. She reminded committee members whose terms are expiring in November to reapply if interested in serving another term on the committee.

Betsy Rodriguez Ruef said she is preparing for back to school outreach and for the Pumpkin Regatta in October.

4. Public: Waamichu Odomo said she is concerned about education and literacy for children.

D. OLD BUSINESS

1. Summer Outreach Strategy: Chris Paul shared his perspectives about outreach at the Tualatin Pride Concert and led committee members in discussion. Feedback shared included that the start time of 5pm may have been problematic, given Friday afternoon traffic; that the committee should have some kind of giveaway or activity at future engagement events; and that the committee would like a way for community members to be able to share feedback, such as a committee email address or a webform.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Urban Renewal: Core Opportunity Reinvestment Area: Tabled until September.

2. Acknowledgement of Native Land and People: Chris Paul briefly reviewed the history of activities related to creating an Acknowledgement of Native Land and People for Tualatin. Paul asked what additional information committee members needed to make an informed recommendation on the topic. Responses included:

- Wanting to know how the members of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde feel about land acknowledgements and if it is an action they would like the City of Tualatin to take.
- What percentage of the population in Tualatin and in Washington County are indigenous? What sources of demographic data exist other than the U.S. Census?
- What are the perspectives of people who do not support adopting a land acknowledgement? How can the City avoid making such a statement performative?
- What are other nearby cities or organizations doing related to land acknowledgements?

The committee also discussed a proposal prepared by Rebekah Morgan for a project that the City could take in connection with an acknowledgment, focused on the ecology, restoration, and sustainability of the Tualatin River habitat. There was consensus to support the project idea. Committee members questions included:

- What actions could we recommend the City share that community members could directly take to participate?
- What are the existing opportunities related to the Tualatin River? What are organizations like the Tualatin Riverkeepers currently doing? What are those organizations' relationships with regional tribes?
- Is there a potential connection between this proposed project and the downtown urban renewal district, which includes the new riverfront parkland?

F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Urban Renewal: Core Opportunity Reinvestment Area

2. Parks & Recreation: Gathering Places

G. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee members were provided copies of a letter written by Rebekah Morgan to the Tualatin City Council and Washington County staff about the upcoming public safety levy and a brief report from Morgan with informational links related to the Tualatin River, existing partnerships, policy context, emergency water preparedness, and other resources.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Minutes prepared by Jerianne Thompson & Betsy Ruef, staff

Proposed Acknowledgement of Native Land and People

City of Tualatin, Oregon

November 2021

"Acknowledgement is a simple, powerful way of showing respect and a step toward correcting the stories and practices that erase Indigenous people's history and culture and toward inviting and honoring the truth."

From the U.S. Department of Arts and Culture [Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgment](#)

Context

This Acknowledgement of Native Land and People was created intentionally and deliberately by community volunteers in the City of Tualatin, Oregon in response to the *Land Acknowledgement Project Charter* issued by the Tualatin City Council on March 22, 2021 (see Appendix 1).

The work group that created this Acknowledgement was composed of representatives from the City Council, City Manager's Office, Parks and Recreation Committee, Arts Advisory Committee, Youth Advisory Committee, Teen Library Committee, and Library Committee. The work group received input and guidance from the Tualatin Historical Society (see Appendix 2) as well as members of the TuaLatinos, Washington County Office of Community Engagement (see Appendix 3), and Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde. Membership in the work group was also extended to members of the Community Involvement Organizations (CIO's).

Work group meetings were public and attendance was open to any and all community members seeking involvement or representation in the process and outcome (see Appendix 4-9 for meeting minutes, Appendix 10 for an outline of the work group's process, Appendix 11 for a visual timeline of this work, and Appendix 12 for established pillars for statement construction).

Purpose

This Acknowledgement is a first step in recognizing and sharing the honest history of how the land in the city of Tualatin was acquired. The land on which Tualatin is situated was obtained via various means, with both ratified and unratified treaties between the tribes and the United States government from 1853 to 1855 and including the 1850 Oregon Land Donation Claim Act, unratified treaties of 1851 and 1854, and the Dawes Act in 1887 the results of which was the forced removal of tribal members from their ancestral homeland.

This Acknowledgement seeks to respect and witness members of our community: past, present, and future, who have been and who will continue to be impacted by settler colonialism. By sharing this Acknowledgement, we break the previous silence that perpetuated our complicity in systems of oppression.

This Acknowledgement is intended to be both a foundation for building relationships within our community as well as a catalyst for continued truth telling, critical thinking, and an action by our community members to support Indigenous communities.

Upon approval and adoption of this statement by the City of Tualatin City Council on **DATE** this Acknowledgment will be submitted for review and approval by the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz.

Guidelines adapted from the *Willamette University website*

The Acknowledgment may be used by anyone wishing to share it at the start of their meeting or event.

The Acknowledgement is intended to be:

- Read at the beginning of all public meetings
- Read at the beginning of all community events
- Shared openly and publicly on our city website
- Supported on the city website by other educational materials
- Accompanied by accountable actions being taken to educate and engage the community about tribal/shared history

In making the Acknowledgment, remember the following:

1. It is a respectful public recognition of the Indigenous history of the land.
2. It is given by the host or facilitator of an event or gathering unless a specific person has been requested to share the Acknowledgement.
3. It is given regardless of whether Indigenous individuals are present.
4. Giving it is *not* the assumed role of Indigenous folks present.
 - a. If a representative from the tribes is present and will offer “welcome to the land” remarks for an event, the host or facilitator is still welcome to offer the Acknowledgement, but it is not necessary.
5. The person giving the Acknowledgement should practice reading the statement so that it flows effortlessly and navigate any pronunciation concerns before it is given.
6. The Acknowledgement can be given as written or the person giving the Acknowledgement can use the Pillars for Statement Construction (see Appendix 12) as guidelines to craft a statement that is more personal and flexible.
7. The Acknowledgement may cause discomfort on the part of the person giving it and/or the people hearing it. This discomfort is expected but not intended to be off-putting, divisive, or a trigger. Rather, it is an opportunity to sit with those feelings, raise awareness of similar feelings felt by our Indigenous community members, and ultimately inspire ongoing awareness and action.

Acknowledgement

As we gather in community, we welcome everyone here with open hearts and minds. We offer gratitude for the land and our opportunity to be here today. Let us pause to acknowledge our presence on the unceded homelands and waters of the Atfalati (“at-fall-uh-tee”) Kalapuyans (“cal-uh-poo-yuns”). Today they are represented by the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz. It is our duty to acknowledge the generational impacts of settler colonialism, forced displacement, and assimilation on Native American families. We recognize these First Peoples, who coexisted in interdependent and sustainable relationships with the land: they are still here and connected to this place. We honor past, present, and future Indigenous members of the Tualatin community.

Suggested Next Steps

- Discussion by Council re: how to implement use of the statement:
 - Resolution to require statement reading - adoption of process rather than statement

or

 - Recommendation - no formal adoption, use the statements & direct staff to do the same
- Create an electronic home base for the information contained in this document (purpose statement, acknowledgement, guidelines for use, and resources) to live and be easily accessed by others in our community
- Create a standing committee entrusted to carry out the work of essential next steps including but not limited to:
 - Routine review and updates to statements in this document
 - Planning and implementing culturally responsive programs like, but not limited to:
 - Outreach to tribal members
 - Seek out connections with local native education associations (e.g., Title 9 programs)
 - Ask what we can do to support *their* work & goals
 - Appropriate compensation for their work & time
 - Accuracy audit of current records and media being shared by our local historians
 - Art competitions and projects
 - Educational events and displays (e.g., the 3-part series recently commissioned by Washington County from 5 Oaks Museum)

Resources

Glossary

Unceded - not ceded or handed over; unyielded

Settler Colonialism - a type of colonialism in which the indigenous peoples of a colonized region are displaced by settlers who permanently form a society there

Forced Displacement - an involuntary or coerced movement of a person or people away from their home or home region

Assimilation - the process through which individuals and groups of differing heritages acquire the basic habits, attitudes, and mode of life of an embracing culture

Creating Land Acknowledgements

Acknowledging the Original People of this Land. *Luna Jiménez Institute*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgement. *Native Governance Center*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Beyond Land Acknowledgement: A Guide. *Native Governance Center*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgement. *U.S. Department of Arts and Culture*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Honor Native Land: Are You Hesitating? Acknowledgement FAQ's. *U.S. Department of Arts and Culture*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acknowledgements. *Oregon State University*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Sobo, E., Lambert, M. C., Lambert, V. (2021). Land Acknowledgments Meant to Honor Indigenous People Too Often Do the Opposite. *The Conversation*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Kalapuyans

Juntunen, J.R., Dasch, M.D., Rogers, A.B. (2005) *The World of the Kalapuya: A Native People of Western Oregon*

Kalapuya: Native Americans of the Willamette Valley, Oregon, *Lane Community College Library*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Kalapuyan Tribal History. *Quartux: Journal of Critical Indigeiouns Anthropology*. . Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Grand Ronde

Our Story. *Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Siletz

Our Heritage. *Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acquisition and Treaties

Donation Land Claims. *Oregon Secretary of State*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Kalapuya: Native Americans of the Willamette Valley, Oregon, *Lane Community College Library*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Oregon Tribal Treaties. *Quartux: Journal of Critical Indigeiouns Anthropology*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

The Dawes Act. *National Park Service*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

This Work in our Community

How Does a School District Acknowledge Stolen Land. *Lake Oswego Review*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Interview with Ethnohistorian David Lewis. *University of Oregon*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Portland Adopts Native-inclusive Resolutions, Including Land Acknowledgements. *Koin 6 News*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Senate Bill 13: Tribal History/Shared History. *Oregon Department of Education*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

The Oregon Trail of Tears and Other Hidden Native Stories. *Five Oaks Museum*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Washington County Museum's Kalapuya Exhibit is Now Framed from a Native Perspective. *Oregon Live*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Navigating Uncomfortable Feelings

Emotional Well-Being and Coping During Crises. *University of California, San Francisco Weill Institute for Neurosciences, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

How Confirmation Bias Works. *Very Well Mind*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

The Anatomy of White Guilt. *Unitarian Universalist Association*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

What is Distress Intolerance? *Center for Clinical Interventions, Government of Western Australia*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

What is White Guilt? *Very Well Mind*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Sample Acknowledgement Statements (see also Appendix 9)

'Auamo. *University of Hawaii Mānoa*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Diversity Councils. *Portland Community College*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Equity Acknowledgement. *Christopher Miller*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement. *University of Colorado Boulder*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acknowledgement. *Clackamas County*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acknowledgement. *Cornell University*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acknowledgement. *Portland Parks Foundation*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acknowledgement. *United Way of King County*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acknowledgement: You're On California Indian Land, Now What?. *California State University San Marcos*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acknowledgement. *Willamette University*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acknowledgement Statement. *City of Northfield Minnesota*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Land Acknowledgement Statement. *Eden Prairie Minnesota*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Oregon Outdoor Recreation Summit. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Our Children Oregon's Land Acknowledgement Statement. *Our Children Oregon*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Territory Acknowledgements. *Native Students Union, University of Victoria*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

WSU Land Acknowledgement. *Washington State University*. Retrieved October 2021 from [link](#)

Honoring the Land: Indigenous Acknowledgment, Tualatin River Restoration & Emergency Water Preparedness

Presentation for IDEA Committee Debrief - August 12, 2025
Prepared by Rebekah Morgan

Opening & Vision

Thank you for giving me this opportunity and for your time. I know how valuable it is. I would like to introduce my ideas for an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement that includes participation in the Tualatin River Restoration and Emergency Water Preparedness Initiative, a community-driven vision that unites ecological healing, cultural recognition, and public safety. This committee already has “land acknowledgment” in our workplan. What I’m suggesting is a way to make that acknowledgment come alive, not just as a statement, but as a living, visible, and actionable commitment that benefits everyone in our city.

The Foundation: Indigenous Land Acknowledgment

This is Kalapuyan land, the ancestral homeland of the Atfalati people. For thousands of years, this river was one of their greatest treasures. It sustained life here, providing food, water, transportation, and deep cultural connection. Many of their descendants are now part of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and they continue to carry ecological knowledge and stewardship traditions that can guide us today. This acknowledgment is not symbolic. It is the root of this initiative. Every action, including ecological restoration, public education, and emergency water preparedness, grows from the truth that this is Indigenous land and that stewardship here has been ongoing for millennia. For a deeper perspective, I encourage you to watch Steph Littlebird’s powerful talk “This IS Kalapuyan Land,” which challenges us to move from

acknowledgement into real action. For a deeper perspective, I encourage you to watch Steph Littlebird's powerful talk *This IS Kalapuyan Land*:

<https://youtu.be/o3NAV9PHH-o?si=4axqurDmpTpmVQq->

Who Is Steph Littlebird and Why Her 2023 Video Matters

Steph Littlebird is a Kalapuyan and Clatsop–Chinook artist, writer, and curator, and a registered member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. She gained national recognition for her exhibition *This IS Kalapuyan Land* at Five Oaks Museum, which reframed historical narratives and centered Indigenous voices. Her work, featured by *ArtNews* and *PBS NewsHour*, blends art, storytelling, and cultural stewardship. In 2023, she published the children's book *My Powerful Hair*, honoring Indigenous identity and healing. Her 2023 video *This IS Kalapuyan Land* challenges us to move beyond acknowledgement as ceremony, calling for ongoing relationships, shared stewardship, and true reciprocity.

Grounding the Initiative in Steph Littlebird's Vision

This initiative is shaped by the principles Steph Littlebird has modeled, entering Indigenous leadership, building long-term relationships, and grounding acknowledgment in ongoing acts of care. It begins with Tribal partnership from the outset, involving the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and other Indigenous leaders in planning, decision-making, and storytelling. It commits to sustained accountability through consistent action, listening, and adaptation in collaboration with these partners. It creates tangible benefits for both Indigenous communities and the broader Tualatin community through ecological restoration, cultural recognition, education, and public safety. And it honors reciprocity by treating the river and surrounding land as living relatives, guided by Indigenous ecological knowledge.

Why Tualatin and Why Now

Across Oregon, Indigenous communities are leading transformative projects, including the Klamath Basin dam removals, Columbia Basin salmon restoration, and Lomakatsi's ecological work with Tribes. Locally, organizations like Tualatin Riverkeepers, the Tualatin River Watershed Council, and Clean Water Services are already restoring habitat and planting Indigenous vegetation. We can build on that work and bring it visibly into our community spaces. The first step is

acknowledgment, and we can't acknowledge a problem unless we understand it. That's why the first phase of this initiative is public education, about the river's history and cultural significance, about the Indigenous stewardship that sustained it, and about the urgent need to protect and restore it now.

The Greenway Trail as Our Classroom

The Tualatin River Greenway Trail already presents a prehistoric timeline through art and signage. We can expand that story to include Indigenous voices and histories connected to this land and river, a section planted entirely with Indigenous vegetation with signage about its cultural and ecological roles, education on invasive species and how they impact the river's health, public art and interpretive stations that highlight restoration efforts and ways residents can help, and QR codes linking to oral histories and videos, including Steph Littlebird's *This IS Kalapuyan Land*.

Emergency Water Preparedness

This initiative connects ecological health directly to public safety. In an emergency, such as the anticipated Cascadia earthquake, the Tualatin River cannot be relied upon as a safe drinking source. Even clear water can carry pollution, runoff, cyanotoxins, and contaminants that boiling or basic filters may not remove. That's why preparedness and restoration go hand-in-hand: teaching residents how to store water safely and for how long, providing filtration tools or demonstrations that remove pathogens and certain chemical contaminants, and linking restoration efforts to resilience, because protecting the watershed now strengthens our emergency readiness later.

Storytelling & Community Grounding

I envision monthly storytime events in the library, and a dedicated gathering space along the Greenway Trail and possibly at Community Park for storytelling and community learning. Stories ground us in truth, build empathy, and bridge differences. Leaders bring together people with different histories, perspectives, and lived experiences, and create space for shared understanding. Tualatin has the heart, commitment, and creativity to lead in this work. I've watched people here show up for each other, protect what matters, and invest their time, energy, and care into this community. That spirit is what makes us uniquely ready to take this step.

Personal Connection

I am not Indigenous, but I know what it means to feel cut off, unseen, and without stability. I have experienced loss, displacement, and the struggle to rebuild. This initiative is a seed, an actionable acknowledgment that honors the land and the people who have always cared for it, protects our river for future generations, and creates a place where everyone in Tualatin can come together, learn, and belong. When Indigenous people, along with other underrepresented groups such as immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, or anyone who has felt unseen, see a community showing up in this way, it sends a powerful message: you belong here, and you are cared for. That sense of belonging does not just improve individual well-being, it strengthens the entire community. When people feel valued and connected, they are more likely to participate, look out for one another, and invest in the shared future of the place we all call home. This initiative is about restoring the river, honoring the land and its people, and preparing our community for the future. It is about creating a Tualatin where everyone, especially those who have been underrepresented, can see themselves reflected in the care and commitment around them. Let us make that vision real. Let us make it a living promise to future generations that we listened, we learned, and we acted.

Partnerships & Funding

This will require collaboration with Tribal Partners such as the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, local groups including Tualatin Parks & Recreation, Tualatin Riverkeepers, Tualatin River Watershed Council, and Clean Water Services, restoration leaders such as Lomakatsi, Tree for All, and Columbia Land Trust, and community organizations including CERT, Metro, schools, and local businesses. Funding could come from Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods grants, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, FEMA hazard mitigation grants, the National Endowment for the Arts, USDA and EPA environmental grants, city and county budget allocations, corporate sponsorships, community-based fundraising such as "Adopt-a-Section" of the River, an annual River & Resilience Festival, crowdfunding, benefit art sales, and philanthropic partners like Meyer Memorial Trust, Collins Foundation, Spirit Mountain Community Fund, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, and The Nature Conservancy.

Next Steps: Relationship and Guidance

To ensure this initiative reflects both respect and accuracy, the next step is to reach out directly to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and artist Steph Littlebird to share this vision and request their guidance. This is more than courtesy, it is part of building a living relationship and ensuring that Indigenous leadership is centered from the start.

We will also consult existing protocol guidelines for Tribal collaboration, including resources from the Native Governance Center, Bureau of Reclamation, USGS, and the US Environmental Protection Agency, as well as local connections through Washington County and Pacific Greens. These resources outline how to approach government-to-government and community-level Tribal consultation in ways that honor sovereignty, knowledge, and cultural traditions.

By making these connections early, we can ensure this initiative moves forward as a true collaboration, grounded in trust, listening, and shared responsibility.

Key Contacts

Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (Cultural Resources Department)
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (Administration Office)
Steph Littlebird (Artist, Writer, Curator, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde)
Washington County, Oregon (Office of Equity, Inclusion & Community Engagement)
Native Governance Center (Tribal Relations Resources)
Pacific Greens (Community and Environmental Advocacy)
USGS (Tribal Consultation Resources)
Bureau of Reclamation (Tribal Relations Program)
US Environmental Protection Agency (Tribal Program Office)

Pronunciation Guide

Kalapuyan (kah luh POO yun)
Atfalati (ah TFAL uh tee)
Grand Ronde (grand RAHND, rhymes with “pond”)
Siletz (suh LETZ, emphasis on “lets”)
Lomakatsi (loh mah KAHT see)
Omakatsi (oh mah KAHT see)
Tualatin (TWAH luh tun, rhymes with “awl”)

Call to Action & Closing

As members of the IDEA Committee, we have the opportunity to lead this work together. I'm inviting us to formally adopt this initiative into our scope so it becomes part of our ongoing priorities, engage directly with Tribal and community partners to ensure this work is guided by the people whose voices and knowledge are essential, co-create educational materials, video content, and public engagement efforts, and work collectively to identify and pursue funding sources to make this vision real. This is not just about restoring a river, it's about restoring our relationship to this place and to one another, and ensuring that our community is prepared for the challenges ahead. Let's make it a living promise to future generations: that we listened, we learned, and we acted.

Thank you.

Follow-Up Brief: Living Land Acknowledgment, Public Safety and Next Steps

Purpose

This brief complements my main proposal by translating the concept of a living land acknowledgment into tangible actions. It connects scientific insights, Tribal leadership, emergency water preparedness, and committee steps into a unified path forward.

Why This Matters

The Tualatin River is both an ecological treasure and the ancestral homeland of the Atfalati Kalapuya. Its health sustains cultural continuity through species like camas, wapato, salmon, and lamprey. A living land acknowledgment brings this relationship into shared stewardship and tangible outcomes.

Cultural Impacts of River Health and Emergencies

Nutrient pollution and warming water are not just technical problems, they directly threaten first foods and ceremonial species. Rising algae and toxins make wapato unsafe to gather, stress lamprey and salmon, and disrupt camas and riparian plants tied to cultural lifeways. In emergencies, when communities may be forced to rely on the river, degraded water quality poses an even greater threat to both public health and cultural survival. For the Atfalati Kalapuya and partner Tribes, river health is inseparable from cultural resilience and community safety.

What We Already Know

Summer Flows

Cool water releases now sustain most of the Tualatin River during dry months, but the system remains sensitive to variability.

Links:

- <https://cleanwaterservices.org/2025/05/27/water-releases-make-tualatin-river-a-year-round-resource/>
- <https://cleanwaterservices.org/category/tualatin-river/>

Water Quality Science

Long-term data from USGS and DEQ show nutrient pollution, harmful algal blooms, and rising water temperatures, a clear call for restoration.

Links:

- <https://or.water.usgs.gov/tualatin/>
- <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/oregon-water-science-center/science/tualatin-river-basin-water-quality-assessment>
- <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/FilterDocs/tmdlwqmp.pdf>

Existing Partnerships

Active Tribal-led projects demonstrate how Indigenous leadership enhances ecological and cultural restoration.

Links:

- <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/news/restoring-fire-prescribed-burn-quamash-prairie-reconnects-land-culture-and-habitat>
- <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/wapato-lake>
- <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/tualatin-river>

Policy Context

Federal directives now require Tribal co-stewardship—a framework that gives local governments both the authority and responsibility to act.

Link:

- <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/elips/documents/so-3403-joint-secretarial-order-on-fulfilling-the-trust-responsibility-to-indian-tribes-in-the-stewardship-of-federal-lands-and-waters.pdf>

Gaps in Tualatin

Although rich in potential, Tualatin currently lacks formal co-stewardship agreements with Tribes, Indigenous representation in signage, and a clear connection between ecological restoration and emergency planning. These gaps keep acknowledgment symbolic rather than lived.

Land Back in Context

Land Back means restoring care, decision-making power, and cultural access to Indigenous Peoples, not always through ownership, but through co-stewardship and shared governance.

Municipal policy can reflect this through Indigenous-designed art, TEK-driven restoration, inclusive decision frameworks, and broad community benefits like clean water and flood resilience.

Link:

- <https://nativegov.org/news/beyond-land-acknowledgment-guide/>

Emergency Water Preparedness and River Health

The Tualatin River in Emergency

The river cannot be relied on for safe drinking unless properly treated; water quality improvements directly support public safety.

Link:

- <https://tualatinriverkeepers.org/about-us/news-updates/cyanobacteria-and-the-tualatin-river-what-to-know>

Cyanobacteria Risk

Boiling or simple filtration will not remove algal toxins; only advanced methods (e.g. activated carbon, reverse osmosis, ozone) are effective.

Links:

- <https://www.epa.gov/cyanoabs/epa-drinking-water-health-advisories-cyanotoxins>
- https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-11/documents/harmful_algal_blooms_and_cyanotoxins_frequently_asked_questions.pdf
- <https://www.cdc.gov/harmful-algal-blooms/prevention/index.html>
- <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/healthyenvironments/drinkingwater/operations/treatment/pages/algae.aspx>

- <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/healthyenvironments/recreation/harmfulalgaeblooms/pages/faqs.aspx>

Practical Safety Notes

FEMA-recommended emergency methods (boiling, bleach) do not remove toxins or chemicals; prevention through river health is more reliable.

Link:

- <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/emergency-disinfection-drinking-water>

Next Steps for the Committee

- Invite the Grand Ronde and Siletz Tribes to co-lead this initiative.
- Formally adopt the project under the IDEA Committee's land acknowledgment priority.
- Assign Tribal Engagement Leads.
- Host a listening session with Tribal representatives soon.
- Within one year, deliver a Tribal-led public event and a pilot restoration project inside city limits.

Conclusion

This document translates the idea of land acknowledgment into meaningful action. By integrating science, Tribal leadership, and public safety, the City of Tualatin can move from words to practice. Formally adopting this work, inviting Tribal co-leadership, and delivering visible projects within one year makes the acknowledgment living and accountable. Grounded in science, guided by Tribal leadership, and tied to public safety, this approach restores culture, protects ecology, and builds community resilience.

Acknowledgement of Native Land and People

Comments & Questions from IDEA Advisory Committee, August 2025:

We need a dialogue with the local tribes, need to actually listen to the voices of the indigenous communities. How do they feel about land acknowledgements? What would they like us to do?

If we adopt an acknowledgement, it should be in combination with an action plan. Those need to happen together. What's the plan for using the acknowledgement statement? What else can the City do?

Data: What percentage of population in Tualatin and in Washington County are indigenous? What data sources are available aside from Census data?

We don't want it to be performative. We also need to consider naysayers, why they don't want the City to adopt an acknowledgement.

What are other cities and organizations in our area doing currently around land acknowledgements?

Actions that connect the community to local indigenous populations should come before adopting / using an acknowledgment statement.

We should consider recommending *not* adopting a statement to read at meetings and events. We can have the information available (on a website), but what we're doing, the action plan, is how you make the acknowledgement active. A statement to read in public is performative.

Suggest including steps people can take as community members, ways people can feel active and participatory as individuals.

Discussion on proposal on Tualatin River restoration

We need to understand what is currently being done. Should the Tualatin Riverkeepers and other groups present to us? Are they doing programs currently in partnership with the tribes? Are there practices being used by local environmental nonprofits learned from indigenous groups?

Consider the timing and potential connections related to the CORA project and the planned riverfront park. What's Tualatin's identity? Is there a connection between those projects and the acknowledgement?

We need a better understanding of the current state of the river, current projects being done in this area (river restoration / ecology / honoring indigenous practices).

Comments & Questions from IDEA Advisory Committee, December 2024

The consultants cautioned us to be sure we have consent from the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde before moving forward. Do we have confirmation that the leadership of the Tribes has reviewed the draft of the acknowledgment and has given consent to move forward? ... I want to make sure that Tribal leadership is looped into these conversations and has a voice in this process.

City staff have not done any additional work to connect with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, nor have members of City Council. This effort would need to be part of the process of bringing an acknowledgement forward.

I also feel it is essential that we pair any acknowledgement with actionable steps for partnering with the indigenous community for the betterment of all involved. The suggested next steps in the document included a digital home base, and a standing committee to further partnership with the indigenous community. Is the City Council prepared and equipped to move forward with **both** of these next steps?

This question came up at the February 2025 committee meeting. The City Council has not discussed the topic since March 2021, and we do not know if there is currently consensus among the Council regarding what actions to pair with an acknowledgment, or whether to adopt an acknowledgment at this time.

What action will accompany the statement? For example, Native American Heritage Month could see the library showing a big display of American indigenous writers.

Recommending actions would be part of the IDEA Advisory Committee's work. The task force who worked on the issue in 2021 made recommendations as part of their report to City Council, and Paradigm Public Affairs also offered guidance on appropriate actions to pair with an acknowledgment in their report to the committee, included in the committee's December meeting packet.

If implemented, how will impact or effectiveness be measured?

How to address this could be part of the committee's recommendations.

Does the City of Tualatin have any influence or can advise on what's taught in the school curriculum about the local tribe's history and present?

Tualatin's schools are part of the Tigard-Tualatin School District [TTSD], a separate entity which the City of Tualatin has little influence on. TTSD has an elected School Board and a Superintendent and follows state and federal guidelines on education.

In addition, Horizon Church operates two schools in Tualatin. As a private religious school, the City also has little influence on their curriculum.