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April 28, 2020

Councillor Shawn Nason
City Hall
Council Building
510 Main St.
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1B9

Dear Councillor Nason,

As Grand Chief of the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO), I am calling for the city to install new permanent flags honouring the Dakota First Nations. In Manitoba there are currently five Dakota First Nation communities: Birdtail Sioux First Nation, Dakota Tipi First Nation, Canupawakpa First Nation, Sioux Valley First Nation, and Dakota Plains First Nation. It is important to recognize our history and our ancestors. Establishing a way for those in the City of Winnipeg to recognize the contributions of the Dakota peoples would be a step in the right direction by the City.

I highlight the rich history of the Dakota peoples, having inhabited several areas north and south of borders that were created to divide the regions which are now called Canada and the United States. The Dakota peoples fought alongside British forces during the War of 1812, long before Canada came into confederation as stands today. They have sacrificed their own warriors to help protect the lands that we all inhabit to this day. They have a beautiful language, a rich heritage, and a culture that is animated with colour and life. They have helped the British and Canadian state time and time again.

Yet, despite the many contributions made by Dakota peoples, Dakota nations were not made signatory to any treaties between Canada nor have they received the same recognition as other First Nations. They were treated as refugees, despite being on traditional lands which were not previously divided by any borders.

I request that a permanent flag be raised at Winnipeg's City Hall in recognition of the Dakota Nations. It is a small step to reconciliation, but an important one nonetheless, one which I will support all the way on behalf of the Dakota First Nations here in southern Manitoba. Wopida, and miigwetch for your recognition and support of our Dakota First Nation peoples.

In pursuit of balance,

Ogema-Makwa
Grand Chief Jerry Daniels
Southern Chiefs' Organization