

RESOLUTION No. 2020-

***RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING ONÖNDAWÁ'GA (SENECA) ANCESTRAL LAND***

BY:

Council Member William Kennedy  
Council Member John Spanbauer

**WHEREAS**, the Onöndawá'ga (Seneca) nation of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy) have called the Niagara Frontier home since prior to the first European settlers; and

**WHEREAS**, the islands of the Niagara River located above the Falls, including the island Celinda Eliza which was the most sacred as it was the closest anyone could stand to the Great Falls (Horseshoe Falls), were all once the site of worship for the Onöndawá'ga (Seneca) "Grandfathers," known as the "Thunderers" who were said to live behind the Great Falls; and

**WHEREAS**, according to historical record, the Onöndawá'ga (Seneca) buried their most revered warriors and healers on Celinda Eliza and on the island now known as Goat Island as a place of honor; and their ancestral heritage has been utilized as the basis for the Maid of the Mist boat tour which has benefited the City of Niagara Falls via tourism; and

**WHEREAS**, since 1995, the month of November has been designated National Native American Heritage Month in honor of the Indigenous People of Turtle Island (North America).

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that this City Council of the City of Niagara Falls, New York does hereby recognize the land in which the city has been built, with emphasis on the most sacred islands of the Niagara River which lay under the Niagara Falls State Park, as the ancestral home of the Onöndawá'ga (Seneca) nation; honoring a long lasting partnership between the People of Niagara Falls as guests and the Onöndawá'ga (Seneca) People as hosts, in a relationship which may exist by friendly and respectful terms based upon this recognition and for all time.

Kennedy \_\_\_\_\_ Spanbauer \_\_\_\_\_ Tompkins \_\_\_\_\_ Touma \_\_\_\_\_ Voccio \_\_\_\_\_