

The Working Group

Demographic Breakdown

Age Group:

- 20-29: 1
- 30-39: 1
- 40-49: 2
- 50-59: 5
- 60-64: 3

Gender:

- Male: 5
- Female: 6
- Two Spirit: 1

Years in Township:

- Lifetime: 6
- 10+ years: 5
- 6-10 years: 1
- Less than 6 years: 0

Income:

- Under \$40,000: 2
- \$40,000-\$90,000: 3
- \$90,000-\$150,000: 4
- \$150,000-\$250,000: 2
- Unreported: 1

Indigenous Members:

- 2 members

PMP Outcome Position:

- Pro Path: 4
- No Path: 4
- Pro Path with Education: 4

Working Group Terms of Reference

Purpose & Mandate

- The Prime Ministers Path (PMP) Working Group is a community-driven initiative to develop actionable recommendations on the future of the PMP in Wilmot Township.
- The group aims to ensure that recommendations reflect historical understanding, community values, and principles of truth and reconciliation.

Composition & Guiding Principles

- 12 members representing diverse community perspectives, selected through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process.
- Selection focused on inclusivity, demographic balance, and a diversity of perspectives.
- The Working Group is guided by principles of respect, collaboration, transparency, and fact-based decision-making.

Objectives & Deliverables

- Create a respectful platform for dialogue that integrates community input.
- Draft recommendations for public review (March 2025), refine them based on feedback, and submit final recommendations to Township Council (April 2025).
- Provide Council with options such as:
 - Removal, relocation, or contextualization of statues.
 - Educational programming enhancements.
 - Alternative solutions that align with community values.

Decision-Making Process

- Consensus-based approach with structured discussions and multiple decision-making levels.

A Note from the Working Group

The Prime Ministers Path Working Group's mandate as defined in the approved Terms of Reference is to co-create a set of actionable recommendations that reflects the values, thoughts and concerns of all community members with an emphasis on truth, reconciliation, historical understanding and community transparency.

The Working Group participants bring a range of opinions regarding the PMP that are representative of the opinions of the community as a whole, as indicated by the various avenues of public consultation pursued from October 2024 until now.

Hearing from the community, the Working Group agrees that making a simple decision between either proceeding with the project as originally envisioned, or scrapping the project altogether does not honour or reflect the richness of the Wilmot Community, or the range of public opinion.

This project means different things to different people, with sometimes polarized ideas of how the project should proceed. The final outcome must honour the many voices in the Township.

The Working Group acknowledges that this is a complex issue.

The draft recommendations are an attempt to integrate the varying opinions from the community.

The Draft recommendations presented here may not reflect the ideal solution for one side or the other, but were formulated in the spirit of healing, inclusion and acceptance for the community overall.

Please provide feedback in the same spirit.

The Draft Recommendations are organized into the Key areas of:

- Governance and Project oversight
- Funding
- Inclusion
- Education
- Location
- Truth and Reconciliation

Working Group Recommendations

Considering the community feedback, current context and nature of the PMP project, the Working Group makes the following recommendations:

- 1 Timing: It is important that a plan for Funding, Inclusion, and Education has been properly advised, devised, and approved by Council and the community before the statues are returned to a public space
- 2 Naming: The Working Group will create a working title for the PMP to identify the shift in the project, and the new energy it has.

Project Name Ideas

Vote: Working Group Naming Ideas

Use dot stickers to vote on your preferred working title

Leaders Throughout History Invites opportunity to include leaders other than just the Prime Ministers.	
Bridging the Past Connecting Canada's history with a more inclusive and equitable future.	
A Path Forward A commitment to moving forward in a positive direction & acknowledging past mistakes.	
The Path of Understanding Encourages visitors to engage with Canada's complex history.	
A Canadian Conversation: Then and Now Honours the dialogue between the past, present, and the future. Encourages interaction between all voices.	

What are your ideas?

Use a stickie to share your name suggestions

Governance & Project Oversight

- 1 **Due to the complexity of the issues surrounding the PMP, the Working Group would like to see a Task Force or Steering Committee created as a first step to guide and direct the implementation going forward.**

The Task Force ensure that the project has the proper commitment, focus and engagement to be successful.

The Task Force should be divided up into sections: Funding, Inclusion, Education, Location, Truth and Reconciliation

- 2 **The Working Group would like to see the Township form direct relationships with key stakeholders - especially CreateScape, and the project founders.**

Implementation ideas from the Working Group:

- Each section of the Task Force would have a Lead
 - One of: Township staff, member of council, subject matter expert
- Each section would have members to move the portfolio forward.
 - Staff, councillors, members of the community, stakeholders, Subject Matter Experts as needed
- Each section does not require a separate lead
- Township to identify stakeholders who need to be involved
 - Professionals, community members, etc.
- Paid or volunteer, as needed

Share your thoughts:

Funding

- 1 **Wilmot Council and community need a clear picture of the project's funding to determine scope and implementation of the project.**
- 2 **The project needs external funding sources in order to be viable.**

Suggestions from the Working Group:

- A clear funding strategy, including consideration of post-implementation operational expenses, should be developed to ensure long-term sustainability.
 - The project should not rely on piecemeal, ad-hoc funding.
- Potential sources of funding: private investment, partnerships and grants.
- No capital expense associated with the project shall be funded by taxpayer dollars.
- The project implementation must be wholly funded from external sources.
 - This includes the fabrication of any new installations.

Share your thoughts:

Inclusion

The Working Group recommends that a range of perspectives be incorporated in the final outcome of the project, with a particular focus on those who have historically been excluded or harmed by the legacy of the figures represented by the statues.

Suggestions from the Working Group:

- Political awareness and an equity-informed lens should be foundational to the project task force.
- Diverse perspectives are not just consulted but actively embedded and meaningfully included in decision-making.
- Any community engagement done to finalize the project plan and implement it should involve Indigenous voices, racialized communities, settlers, new comers, youth, and marginalized groups.
- Harmful impacts of the project, however unintended, should be acknowledged as part of honouring the current context of the project.

Share your thoughts:

Education

- 1 **Education was a key component of the original vision of the Prime Ministers Path, and should continue to be part of the project going forward.**
- 2 **Based on the feedback from the community it is clear that education must go beyond a static plaque—it should be interactive, dynamic, and include different perspectives.**

Suggestions from the Working Group:

- Use Multi-Media Storytelling – Create a digital archive or living document so perspectives and research can evolve over time.
- Ensure Well-Researched Educational Content – Work with historians, educators, Indigenous scholars, and community members to develop accurate and balanced history.
- Share History with Complexity – Tell the full story by including multiple perspectives, not just celebratory or one-sided accounts.
- Encourage Critical Thinking – Use questions instead of just facts, like:
 - What policies did this leader support?
 - How did they shape Canada?
 - Whose voices are missing from this story?
- Build Strong Partnerships – Work with universities, Indigenous groups, and educational institutions to keep history relevant, accurate, and up to date.

Share your thoughts:

Location

- 1

The original location of the PMP was on Castle Kilbride grounds in Wilmot Township.

The location of the statues has been raised as a key issue. The Working Group acknowledges the voices that have shared that there is harm in a public display of the statues.
- 2

The Working Group will recommend that regardless of the chosen location for the project, there should not be a statue placed at the fountain at Castle Kilbride.

Suggestions from the Working Group:

- Identify and examine the possibility of other sites for the project.
- As a publicly accessible national historic site, Castle Kilbride may be a feasible location for the project; however, the issue of informed consent must be addressed, ensuring that individuals have the choice to engage with or avoid the statues.
- The statues should be accompanied by signage that provides a content warning, or acknowledges that the display presents a particular view of history.
- Efforts should be taken to ensure the statues can only be accessed intentionally. This may be achieved through the use of natural barriers such as trees or shrubs.
- Indoor or outdoor placement should be evaluated based on the purpose of the display—whether it serves a historical, educational, or artistic role.
- The continuation of the project should not only be for commemoration, but should also foster dialogue.

Share your thoughts:

Truth And Reconciliation

Truth and Reconciliation, Indigenous inclusion and the effects of colonialism has repeatedly surfaced in the community feedback. The Working Group feels that this issue is critically relevant to this project, and in the wider community context.

Rather than recommendations, the Working Group offers these questions to help strengthen the process:

- ① What insights are emerging from the community, and how can we build on them?
- ② What lessons can we take from this experience to strengthen our approach?
- ③ What opportunities do we have to improve moving forward?
- ④ How can we build authentic relationships moving forward?
- ⑤ How do we ensure we're not centering our own perspectives at the expense of others?
- ⑥ How do we step back to allow for a more diverse range of voices and experiences?
- ⑦ How do we create a process where multiple perspectives guide the direction, not just our own?

Actionable steps to align with Truth and Reconciliation:

- Include Regional Indigenous advisory bodies, local Indigenous leaders and community members.
- Co-create meaningful ways for Indigenous people to be involved.
- Identify how Indigenous histories and stories may be incorporated.

This process can begin to build a framework for ongoing Indigenous consultation and leadership in decision-making.

What do we do with the Statues?

Creative Community generated ideas

DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE

- ▶ Include empty platforms for rotating art displays that address current political and social issues.
 - Performance art in summer, installation art in colder months—ensuring the space remains an evolving conversation.
- ▶ Speakers' Corner: A platform for people to share their own stories and histories of Canada and being Canadian.
- ▶ A living history: an online platform for visitors to share thoughts, information, and resources.
- ▶ Indoor museum installation with multi-media elements capturing evolving perspectives.
 - Introduce augmented reality feature.

NEW DIRECTION

How can we achieve representation in a new way?



*photos courtesy of Ruth Abernethy, SJM sculptor

LEAVE THE PAINT

- ▶ Keep any paint as part of the current context and ongoing dialogue.
- ▶ Add new paint designed by a local Indigenous/youth artist
 - "Ask me a question."
 - "What is the whole story?"
 - "Who told the stories that you know?"

WHAT ARE YOUR IDEAS?



Scan to see how Bristol, UK, is reimagining history and statues

REIMAGINE

Rewild - Return the current statues Let Nature Take Over the and around the statues Invite Indigenous groups to serve as stewards of the space, and return to native species.

Reposition Lay the SJM statue on its side to acknowledge the controversies and complexities of history and evoke dialogue and critical thinking

Repurpose use the bronze from the statues create Wilmot mementos as a symbolic transformation

CO-CREATE COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Allow the space to be dynamic and community owned with respectful dialogue and interaction :

- "Conversation is welcome, aggression is not."
- "Think before you speak. Read before you think."
- "Things can be added, but not erased (except in cases of hate speech)."

Anything else you'd like to share...

