



## PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

May 23, 2022

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION

**Project Name/Address:** Madison Landmarks Commission Land Acknowledgement  
**Legistar File ID #** [68859](#)  
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### Background

The Madison Landmarks Commission is tasked with being the stewards of the cultural resources within the boundaries of our municipality. As part of that work, the commission undertakes the protection of resources with tribal affiliations due to Madison being the site of longterm human habitation. While the strictures placed on us for how we go about protecting archaeological resources can protect them from looting, it has the unintended consequence of erasing Native American history from our landscape and wider civic discussions.

The commission has undertaken changes in recent years to highlight when development or ground-disturbing activities may impact significant archaeological sites and staff continues to work towards formalizing a process for tribal consultation and collaboration in how we do work that impacts these types of sites. With that as the context for how we are proceeding with being more mindful of how we undertake this work, staff is recommending that the Landmarks Commission adopt a land acknowledgement, which we would post on our website and that the chair would read at the opening of each meeting. This would not serve as the end to our work on this front to ensure we are telling the full story of Madison, but another step in that process.

For the initial wording, staff reviewed other organizations that have adopted formal land acknowledgements, drafted language, and then collaborated with Alder Arvina Martin. Here is the language we have developed:

Madison is located in the heart of the Hoocąk Nation's ancestral homeland. The US Government repeatedly removed the Hoocąk people from this place by force. The Hoocąk left their home under duress, but their deep ties to their homelands made it so that they repeatedly returned. They call this place Teejop, which translates to Four Lakes in English.

The City of Madison is committed to ongoing collaboration and partnership with the Hoocąk Nation. We also acknowledge the government-to-government relationship created by the treaties between the Hoocąk Nation and the Federal Government. The Madison Landmarks Commission is committed to engaging with the Hoocąk Nation as a peer, and as part of its ongoing stewardship with the cultural resources within the city.

If the Landmarks Commission finalizes wording, staff would initiate formal consultation with the Hoocąk Nation and bring back the final draft of the wording based upon those discussions. The Landmarks Commission would vote on adoption of that land acknowledgement at that time.