

Mawaknutma'tnej Circle

Let's come together and deliberate with each other
University of King's College

October 22, 2025

William Lahey
President and Vice-Chancellor
University of King's College

Kwe' President Lahey,

We write to offer our enthusiastic endorsement for the University of King's College's Southeast Corner Project (SEC).

As Mi'kmaw members of the Mawaknutma'tnej Circle, the Indigenous advisory forum at King's, we have been included in discussions about this new building from the beginning of the design phase of the project. King's invited our participation and contributions as an act of reconciliation and the acknowledgement that the contemplated building is to be built on unceded Mi'kmaw land, in a relationship based on the spirit of the Peace and Friendship Treaties. We have offered our guidance in the design process, encouraging the architects from Diamond Schmitt and Abbott Brown to go beyond our Circle and seek input and inspiration from other Knowledge Keepers in our community. We have been pleased to see our feedback put into action by the architects and by King's.

This resulting design, as presented to us on June 6, 2025, envisages a building that will be, in form and function, an essential manifestation of King's commitment to making a tangible difference to the ongoing process of truth and reconciliation. It will include dedicated learning, living and gathering spaces to foster community engagement and educational inclusivity with and for the Mi'kmaw and all Indigenous communities, as well as for everyone. We are particularly pleased to know the SEC will include a permanent and purpose-designed Indigenous Student Centre in a building that incorporates and celebrates the wisdom, storytelling, design traditions, material culture, and history of the Mi'kmaw people.

It is important to us that the SEC project provides a new home for the School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing. In the Circle, we've worked with the faculty and administration of King's to guide the creation and development of the Mi'kmaw Journalism Initiative and the broader curricular changes created to respond to the calls of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to educate all journalism students on the history of Indigenous peoples and to help foster more Indigenous voices in media. The

SEC project will ensure that the school has a home that suitably honours and strongly enables that ongoing work.

We are pleased to see how the SEC design thoughtfully incorporates the Circle's input and guidance, and that of additional Mi'kmaw partners, in a building with safe, dedicated cultural spaces for the Indigenous community at King's and beyond. The project features meaningful design and functional elements that will tangibly recognize its location in Mi'kma'ki and convey a strong sense of place and of welcome and belonging to all.

We write to share our belief that the SEC project will have an essential role in the higher education landscape for gatherings, discussions and progress that put reconciliation into action in a building that both honours Mi'kmaw and all Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island and creates space for their stories in Canadian media and literature. We support King's significant commitment to working with us to create a building that will ensure that the teaching and learning that happens within it will amplify the stories of the land on which it is built and of the people of that land. We call on others to do the same in all the ways, including financial support, that will help King's make the SEC project into reality for the future of King's and of truth and reconciliation in Mi'kma'ki and across the land now known as Canada.

Wela'lioq,

The Mawaknutma'tnej Circle Members

Natteal Battiste
Kathryn R. Burton
Sheila Isaac
Kyler Johnson
Buffy Keillor
Ann LaBillois
Catherine Martin
Emma Metallic
George Paul
Ann Sylliboy
Spencer Wilmot