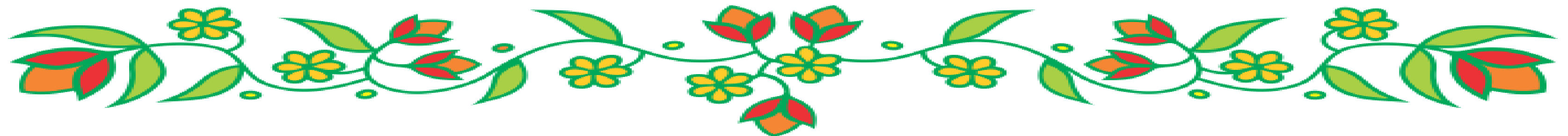


# AAMJIWNAANG CULTURAL CENTRE/MULTI-PURPOSE BUILDING

CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS & MEANINGS



January 8, 2024



# MANDATE, VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

## Mandate:

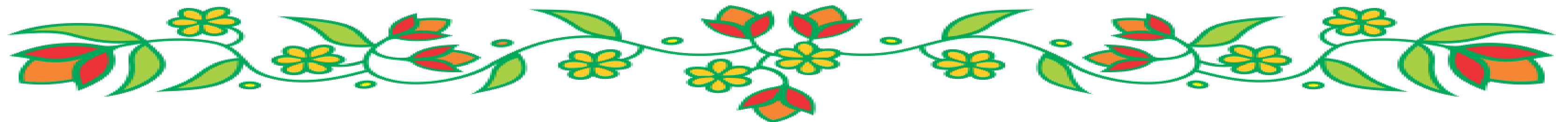
- Our place of gathering, where people come to exchange, receive, and share our Anishinaabe history, culture, language, and way of life! From our first breaths, we learn, grow, and ultimately share our knowledge, with those that come into our lives. This Cultural Centre will allow Aamjiwnaang to achieve this on a grander scale reaching more people, community seeking knowledge.

## Vision Statement:

- To preserve our culture and history for the coming Seven Generations.

## Mission:

- To celebrate the Anishinaabe Culture in an approachable way, that invites the community to preserve, revitalize, and reclaim the rich heritage of Aamjiwnaang



# AAMJIWNAANG FIRST NATION HERITAGE

“The Anishinaabe of Aamjiwnaang are a part of the 3 Fires society, which also includes Potawatomi and Odawa tribes.

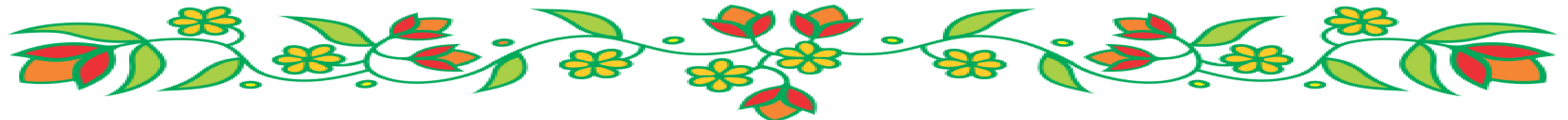
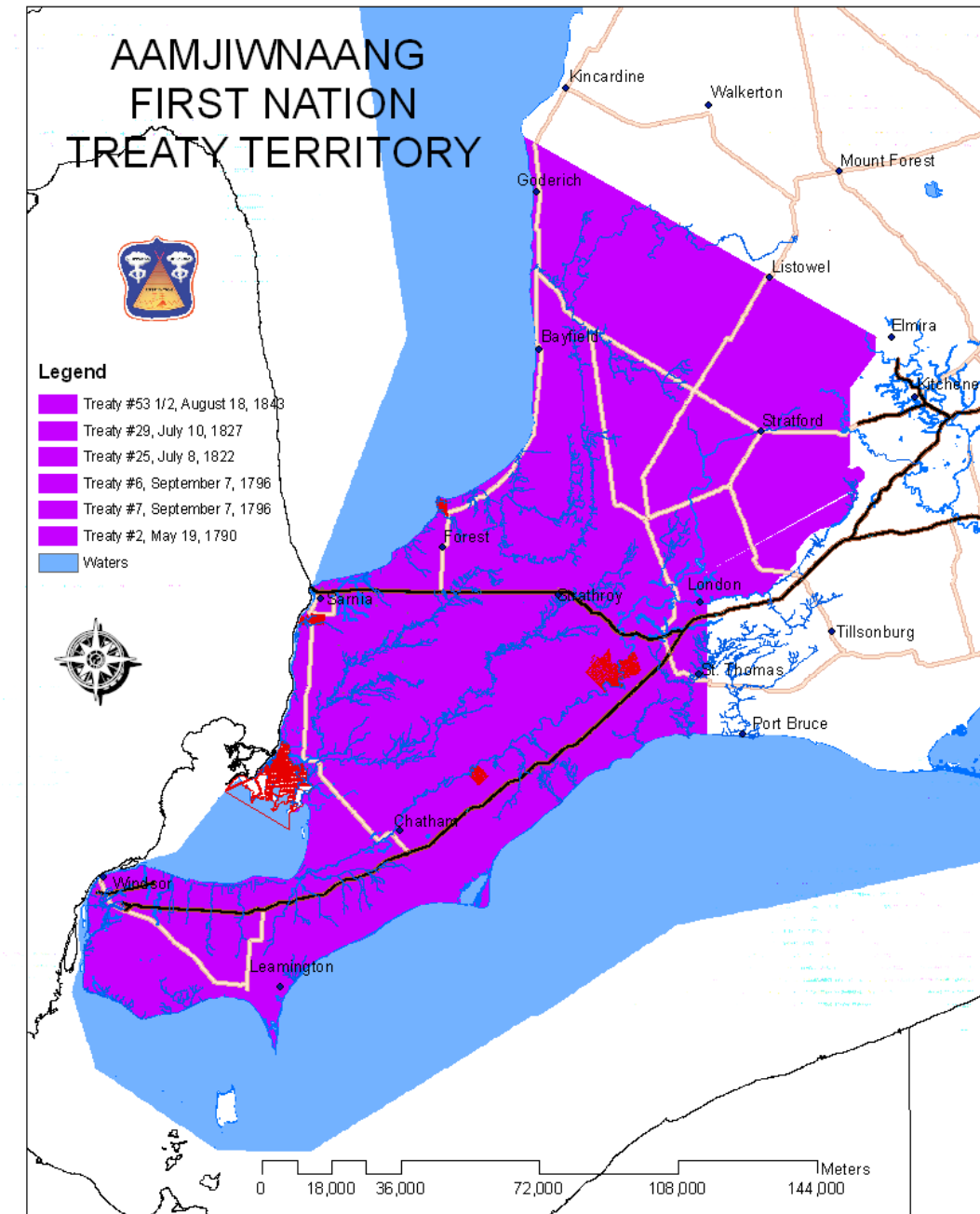
The waterways of the Great Lakes have been very important to our people who travelled in birch bark canoes to trade, hunt, fish and gather food.

Our way of life and our ceremonies were disrupted with colonization and cultural ceremonies were banned and are just now being revived within the last 50 years.

It would be great and make perfect sense to include a History timeline in the design of the building. The timeline could include migration dates, Treaty signing dates and Chief timelines

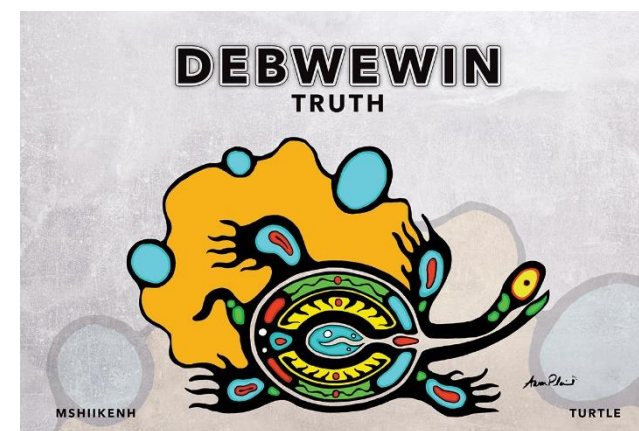
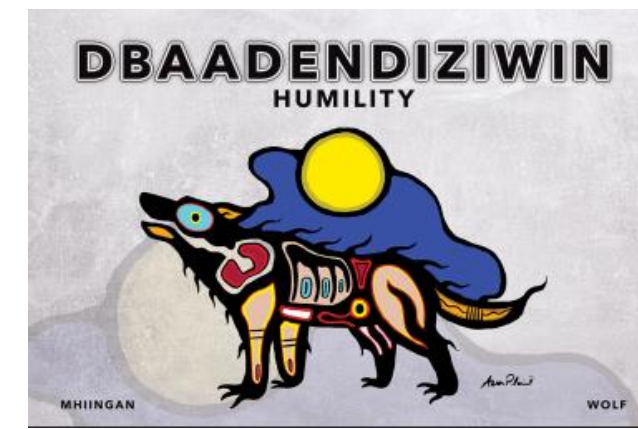
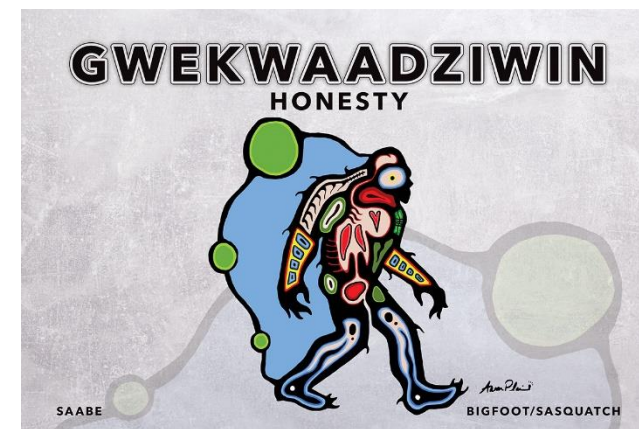
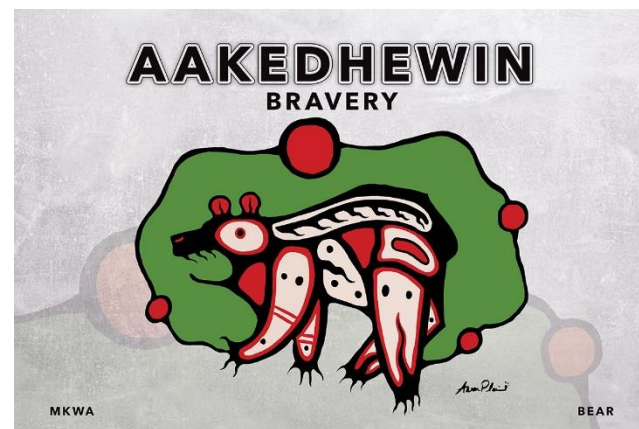
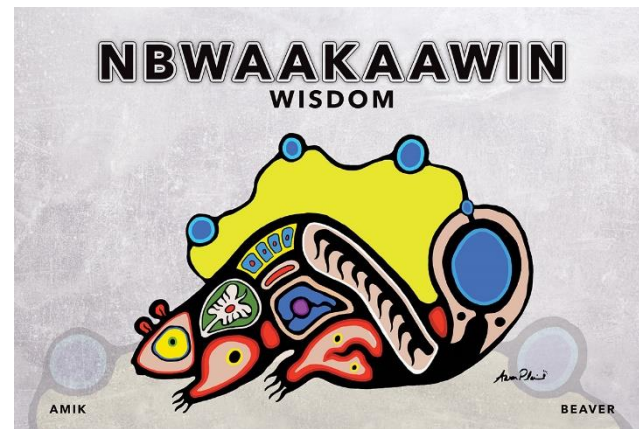


100. SARNIA RESERVE BAND HOUSE c.1914





# SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS



**Wisdom**

**Love**

**Respect**

**Bravery**

**Honesty**

**Humility**

**Truth**

The 7 Grandfather Teachings lay the groundwork for a well rounded, respectful person. These Teachings will last a lifetime and are the guiding principals for how Anishinaabe live their lives. The Grandfather Teachings were often taught in sweat lodges. These teachings are important for our future generations.

The 7 Grandfather Teachings can be incorporated with the same signage as the Residential School Monument. A wall mural or display signs at the entrance of the building were suggested.

# FOUR ELEMENTS



**Nibi - Water**



**Aki - Earth**



**Shkode - Fire**



**Nisewin - Air**

**Nibi - Water** is very important, water is life. The water was our highways and often used for travelling. Water brought different foods like fish, rice and was used to grow corn and other vegetables. Nothing survived without it. Water is a conductor of spirits and there is always knowledge and wisdom to be obtained near water.

Moving water should be incorporated into the building, such as a fountain structure. Accents in different shades of blue could represent water/river. An architectural design of flowing water could also be used.

**Aki - Earth** also known as Mother Earth, she is the base that holds our existence together. Without the Earth, we have no body. Our bodies, like Mother Earth holds all the elements that live within.

The building should encompass as much natural material as possible or utilize low maintenance materials that resemble natural materials. i.e. exterior siding that resembles natural birch bark.

**Shkode - Fire** is a powerful gift that was used in the old days to prepare foods, warm our homes and to carry our prayers. Fire is also used to conduct many different ceremonies.

It would be important to include a designated sacred fire area (indoor or outdoor), this could be used for ceremonies involving fire (sunrise, peyote, fasts, funerals, etc.).

**Nisewin - Air** is like the Spirit all around us. Without air or wind, we have no life. In our Creation story Creator blew the air of life through the Megis shell and into the human being, this was the first breath of life.

Megis shell could be used to represent Air, Wind and the first human being breath. The shell could be used in frames and artwork within the building.



# CLANS & ANIMALS

Clans & Animals are important to Anishinaabe. They provided our food, housing, clothing, bedding, bags, shoes, moccasins, lacing for sewing, rawhide for drums, sports materials, snowshoes, bones and dried jerky. Everything was used for something.

The different Clan Animals could be displayed in the gardens using wrought iron in the shape animals. Animal paw/foot/hoof/etc. prints could also be stamped into the concrete sidewalks.

**Wolf**  
**Maahiingan**



**Crane**  
**Jiijaak**



**Deer**  
**Waawaashkesh**



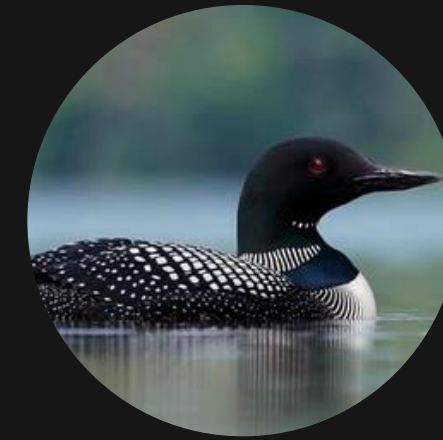
**Turtle**  
**Mshiikenh**



**Eagle**  
**Migizi**



**Loon**  
**Maang**



**Bear**  
**Mkwa**





# FOUR SACRED MEDICINES



**Tobacco  
Asemaa**



**Sweet Grass  
Wiingaashk**



**Cedar  
Giizhik**



**Sage  
Mshkodewashk**

These four medicines are used daily to help cleanse our mind, body and spirit. These four along with many others were gathered from above and below ground during the proper seasons.

It would be important to include these medicines in or around the proposed building. A medicine garden would be a great way to grow and harvest these medicines for Community use. The garden could include a short story/write up using signs and/or QR codes.





- **Nibi** - Water
- **Shkode** - Fire
- **Giizhaandak** - Cedar
- **Niiwingani Keyhing** - Four Directions
- **Wesiinyag** - Animals
- **Mishkikiin** - Medicines
- **Enaandegin** - Colours

# LANGUAGE

## (GDAANWEWNINAA)

Gdaanwewninaa means the sound of our voice/language. The Anishinaabe word for our language is Anishnaabemowin. Anishnaabemowin is very important and essential to who we are as people. The language is very important to our sacred ceremonies, history, stories and science. Aniishnaabemowin defines who we are as people.

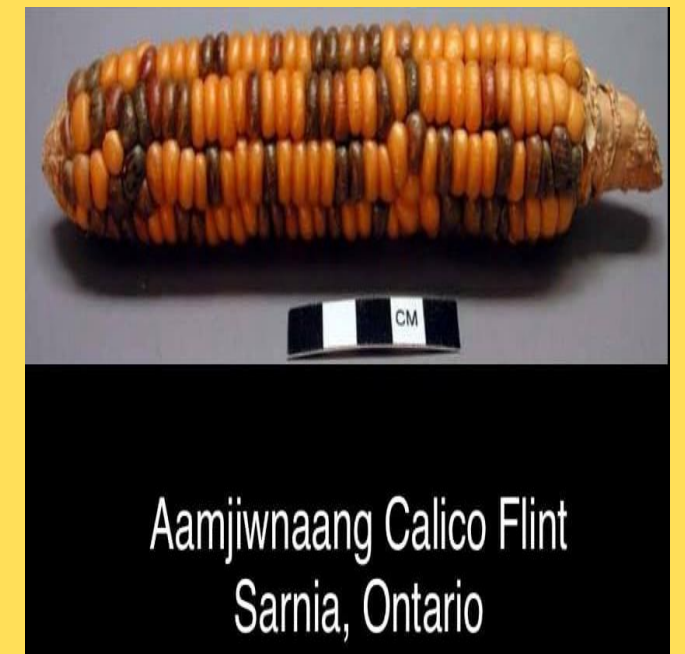
Aniishnaabemowin should be incorporated into the building as much as possible. The language could be used for signage with translation, voice pronunciation could be used as well. Birchbark with Aniishnaabemowin could be used for signage within the building. The building itself should be named in Aniishnaabemowin.



# FOOD & GATHERINGS

Just about any type of gathering involves food; ceremonies, funerals, pow wow or round dance. Most of these gatherings are followed by or begin with a feast. What makes a feast is having our four traditional foods; corn, fish, berries and wild rice. Most gatherings in the community take place at the Maawn Doosh Gumig Community & Youth Centre. When there's a death in the community the programming at the Maawn Doosh Gumig Community & Youth Centre is cancelled, the Cultural Centre could be utilized for funerals. Funerals are a ceremony to celebrate the end-of-life cycle.

Funerals are a large part of our community. Our current space needs an upgrade, and this is a great opportunity to address this need. We require the ability to gather and provide food to families and community Members.



Aamjiwnaang Calico Flint  
Sarnia, Ontario





# LODGES (WIIGWAAM)

Long ago our people lived in lodges, there were two types of lodges; long lodge/long house and round lodges. People didn't only live in these dwellings, they also had different types of ceremonies in them. Today these lodges are still used to conduct ceremonies in, they are also used to share teachings and to gather in.

A lodge like aspect would be great to see incorporated into the design, the Ziibiwing Cultural Centre (Mt Pleasant) main entrance is made to look like a lodge.





# MATERIALS

Many natural materials were used by our Ancestors and are still being used by us today. Copper vessels were used to hold and purify water. It also acts as a natural conductor of energy. Birch bark was used for many things: making homes, canoes, crafts, pails, fire starter, medicine and food dishes. Florals (flower art) are highly used to decorate clothing and many other crafts. Florals were widely used in our beadwork. Floral beadwork is how other tribes recognize us as Anishinaabe.

The Cultural Centre should be designed to tie into the natural aspects that surround our cultural teachings and medicines. Copper fixtures could be use, birchbark framing could also be used. Birch bark could be used for signage, wall design and a canoe could be displayed. Florals could be used on the outside of the building and on signage. They could also be incorporated into the carpet/flooring, drapes. Artifacts could be displayed in wall displays.

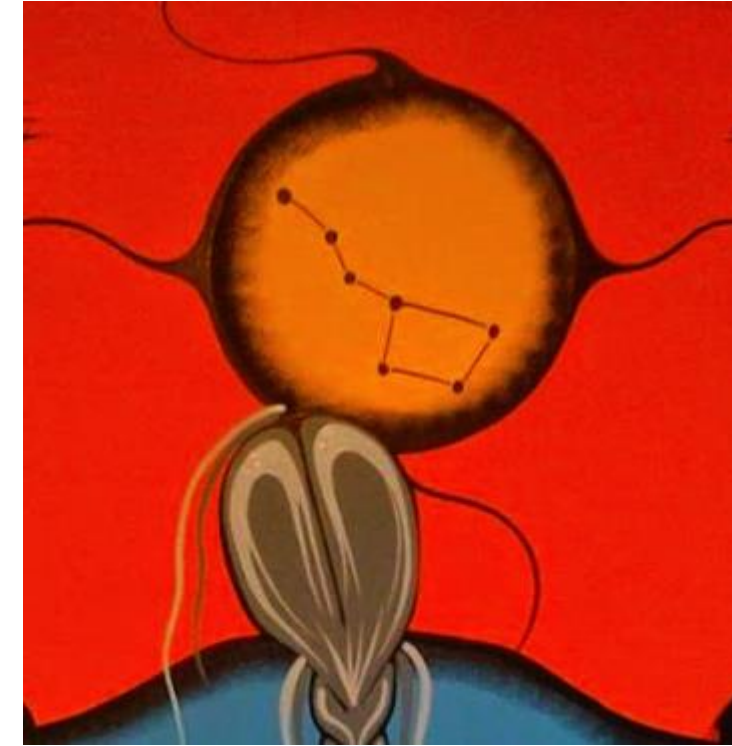
- **Copper - Mishwaabik**
- **Animal Parts (antler/bones, hides, etc.)**
- **Birch Bark - Wiigwaas**
- **Cedar (wood) - Giizhig**
- **Florals - Waawaaskone**
- **Pipstone/Stone/Granite**
- **Artifacts**





# The Sun, Moon and Stars

The Sun(Giizis), Moon(Dibikgiizis) and Stars(Anaang) have significant meaning to the Anishinaabe. The Sun is also called Granfather Sun, it rises in the east and sets in the west. The Sun teachings can help with many life struggles. The Sun Dance Ceremony is preformed during the summer months in our Community. The Moon is significant to our Matriarchs, there are many teachings and Ceremonies conducted for Grandmother Moon. The Moon can also trigger emotions and cycles. The Stars are also very important to the Anishinaabe, the stars hold many Mother teachings. They also tell where the Sweat Lodge originated. There are stories of the Star Nation as well.



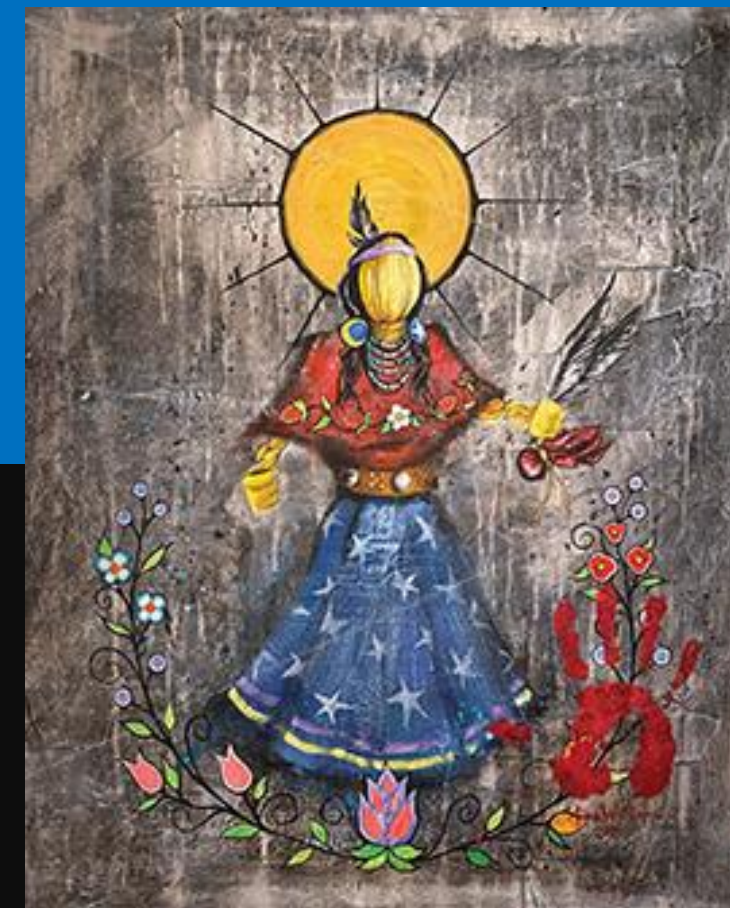
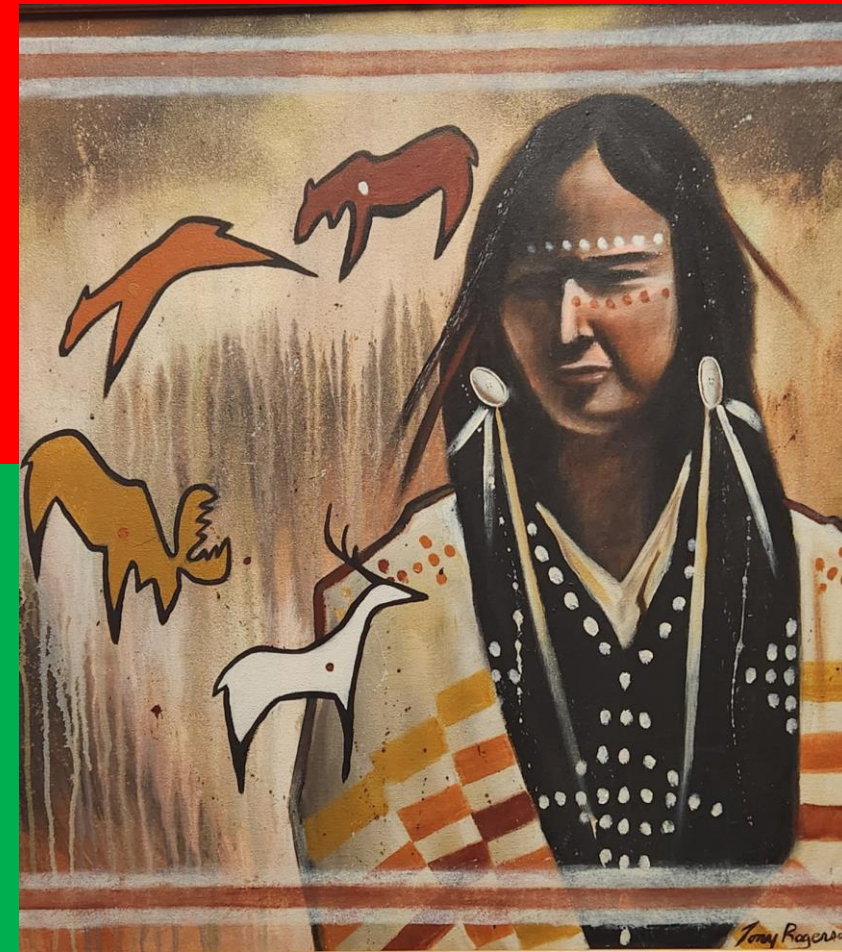


# Colours, Artwork & Designs

Colours are important, they can set the mood and help calm the mind. Each Colour has a significant meaning behind it. The colour blue could be used to represent the river/water. Its also said that blue can calm the mind. Natural earth tone colours could also be used in the colour scheme of the building.

Artwork ideas have been suggested the most, from floral artwork to murals. Artwork from community Artists would be ideal to display. Floral artwork could also be incorporated in many different areas of the building, i.e. floors, trims/borders, signage. The natural beauty of floral designs were and still are valued by the Anishinaabe.

Designs and artwork must coincide with one another. Florals have been heavily suggested by both the Project Team and the Community. It was suggested by a Community member that the building be in the shape of a Turtle(Mshikehn).



# Aamjiwnaang Cultural Centre/Multi-Purpose Building Project Team Members

## Band Councillors

**Darren Henry**  
(Band Councillor)

**Janelle Nahmabin**  
(Band Councillor)

## Band Staff

**Carole Delion**  
(Economic Development Coordinator)

**Jamie Maness**  
(Community Services Coordinator)

**Patrick Nahmabin**  
(Communications Officer)

**Harrison Plain**  
(Band Manager)

**Verlynn Plain**  
(Community Services Assistant)

**Wilson Plain**  
(Public Works Coordinator)

**Barb Urlacher**  
(Special Projects Liaison)

**James Wrightman**  
(Economic Development Assistant)

## Community Members

**Jesse Plain**  
(Community Knowledge Keeper)

**Mike Plain**  
(Community Knowledge Keeper)

**Pam Plain**  
(Community Knowledge Keeper)

**Sophie Solares**  
(Community Knowledge Keeper)

## Consultants

**Natalie Jackson**  
(Burkhart Gilchrist Architects)

**Ruth Burkhart**  
(Burkhart Gilchrist Architects)

**Tim Maness**  
(SFNS Technical Services Manager)





# Aamjiwnaang Cultural Centre/Multi-Purpose Building

Community Members that provided feedback:

Ernesto Aviles  
Jacky Cunningham  
Marley Fairfield-Staats  
Ayden Fisher  
Abby Gravelle

Josh Gravelle  
River Jacobs-Plain  
Danielle Nahdee  
Marina Plain  
Gina Sinopole

Ashley Stone  
Dorothy White  
Shane Williams  
Anonymous 1  
Anonymous 2

Chimiigwetch for your time

