

## City of Toronto Honourific and Street Naming Policy

<b>Date:</b>	November 19, 2013
<b>To:</b>	Executive Committee
<b>From:</b>	City Manager
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2013\Cluster B\TEC\EC13031 (AFS#17991)

### **SUMMARY**

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This report summarizes the issues associated with the City's existing Honourific and Street Naming Policy and recommends amendments to the Policy to provide additional clarity and definition to the street naming criteria, and to provide for the honouring of worthy individuals, living or deceased, as it relates to both property and street naming. Additionally, an amendment is sought to delegate authority to the Deputy City Manager, Cluster B, for a final determination on duplicate and similar sounding street names, and objections raised by Toronto Fire Services, Toronto Police Service and Toronto Emergency Medical Services.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council adopt the amended City of Toronto Honourific and Street Naming Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to this report (the "Policy");
2. City Council delegate the authority to the Deputy City Manager, Cluster B, to make a final determination as to whether a street name is a duplicate or is similar sounding, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Policy, and to reject any names objected to by Toronto Fire Services, Toronto Police Service and Toronto Emergency Medical Services; and

3. City Council authorize the introduction of the necessary bills, including amendments to Chapter 27, Council Procedures, of the City of Toronto Municipal Code to give effect.

## **Financial Impact**

There are no financial implications from this report.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

On August 1, 2000, Council adopted the first street naming policy of the amalgamated City. The Council Decision Document can be found at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2000/agendas/council/cc/cc000801/wks15rpt/cl009.pdf>

On November 29 and 30, 2011, City Council adopted Item EX12.2, "Sponsorships and Naming Rights: Partnership Policies to Promote and Recognize Contributions to the City" which included Appendix 3: "City of Toronto Honourific and Street Naming Policy". A copy of the Council Decision Document can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.EX12.2>

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The City's Honourific and Street Naming Policy restricts the naming of streets to names which:

- i) are not similar sounding to existing street names;
- ii) use an individual's last name;
- iii) are awarded posthumously to individuals who have been deceased for at least two years; and
- iv) unless there are exceptional circumstances, are not awarded to living individuals.

Community Councils have the delegated authority to approve the naming of streets which meet the above-noted criteria. New street names approved by Community Council which do not comply with the existing Policy are then forwarded to City Council for consideration.

Historically, the City has received an average of 45 applications annually for new street names. These requests are typically generated by developers in naming new streets within their development proposal, community groups in honouring members of their community, Community Councils, or individual citizens.

Any new street name proposed which complies with the existing Policy, or Motion put forward by Community Council for the naming of a particular street, results in a formal staff report submission to Community Council for their consideration. In recent years, if the proposed name did not comply with the existing Policy, Community Council recommended approval of the new street name to City Council and, in all cases, the new name was ultimately approved.

Amendments to the City of Toronto Honourific and Street Naming Policy are being proposed to provide a more fulsome honouring of individuals in both property and street naming, and to improve operational efficiencies in the processing of street naming applications. The proposed amendments are less restrictive, reflecting City Council's history in approving names which did not conform to the current Policy, while continuing to support Toronto Police Service, Toronto Fire Services and Toronto Emergency Medical Services requirements for the use of non-similar sounding street names.

## **COMMENTS**

In recent years, due to the restrictive street naming criteria contained within the City's current Honourific and Street Naming Policy and the large inventory of existing street names, about half of the estimated 45 annual street names proposed were deemed to be out of compliance with the Policy, and forwarded to City Council for consideration. In all cases, Council accepted the new name proposed.

Many of the non-compliant street names proposed were to honour individuals by their first and last names and therefore failed to meet the Policy's "last name only" criteria. Additionally, many of these names were found to be non-compliant with the "similar sounding" section of the Policy, when the individual components of each street name were assessed separately.

As key stakeholders, Toronto Police Service, Toronto Fire Services and Toronto Emergency Medical Services were consulted regarding the existing Policy's criterion where similar sounding street names are rejected outright. All three first responder groups were supportive of updating the current approach and agreed that for street names that contained more than one word, the "similar sounding" criteria could be applied to the entire street name, in lieu of assessing the name by each of its individual word components. This proposed approach would provide greater flexibility in naming of a street, while continuing to meet the needs of the first responders.

To improve operational efficiencies in processing the naming applications, and to allow more fulsome honouring of individuals, the following are the key policy changes being proposed to the City of Toronto Honourific and Street Naming Policy as contained in Appendix 1:

- a) Expand the definition of similar sounding so that a proposed street name will be considered in its entirety and not be rejected because of non-compliance of

individual elements of the name. For example, Apple Hill Road and Apple Road would not be similar because each name does not sound similar in its entirety.

- b) Delete the current provision with respect to street naming which allows only the last name of an individual. This allows the honouring of individuals in a more fulsome manner.
- c) Delete the current provision with respect to properties and street names which restricts posthumous street naming to those individuals who have been deceased for at least two years. This allows recently deceased individuals to be recognized.
- d) Delete the current provision which restricts properties and street naming to living persons only in exceptional circumstances. This allows for naming of living persons that have historical, cultural or social significance to be recognized.
- e) Duplicate and similar sounding street names will be rejected. This reflects the concerns expressed by the first responders to eliminate confusion as to the address of the emergency and to reduce the risk of a misdirection of the response crews and delayed response times. For example, Jackson Avenue and Albert Jackson Lane would not be duplicates or similar sounding because each name is not identical or does not sound similar in its entirety.
- f) Amend the Policy to reject any names objected to by Toronto Fire Services, Toronto Police Service and Toronto Emergency Medical Services. This also reflects the concern expressed in (e) as outlined above.

The proposed amendments to the Policy are expected to significantly increase the number of compliant naming applications while respecting the concerns raised by first responders about the risks associated with responding to calls at addresses with similar sounding street names while continuing to also prohibit the use of duplicate street names.

It is also recommended that the Deputy City Manager, Cluster B be delegated the authority to reject new street names, if a proposed street name is a duplicate, similar sounding and/or if the name is objected to by Toronto Fire Services, Toronto Police Service, or Toronto Emergency Medical Services, on the basis that such names present a risk to their effective response, and therefore represent a risk to public health and safety.

The Toronto Police Service, Toronto Fire Services and Toronto Emergency Medical Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and concur with the report recommendations. Legal Services has also been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Joseph P. Pennachetti  
City Manager

## **ATTACHMENT**

Appendix 1 - City of Toronto Honourific and Street Naming Policy

## **CITY OF TORONTO HONOURIFIC AND STREET NAMING POLICY**

### **1. STATEMENT**

- 1.1. The City of Toronto honours and promotes the heritage and identity of the City in a number of ways, including through the naming or renaming of civic properties and streets, which is the subject of this policy.

### **2. OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE**

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to establish a naming protocol that:
  - 2.1.1. provides guidelines and a consistent process for the naming of civic properties and streets;
  - 2.1.2. protects the reputation and integrity of the City of Toronto and its assets;
  - 2.1.3. ensures alignment with the City's programs and services.

### **3. SCOPE**

- 3.1. This policy does not apply to individual or to corporate naming rights which are covered by a separate policy.
- 3.2. Gifts or donations to such initiatives as the Commemorative Tree and Bench Program are not covered by this policy. Such philanthropic contributions are governed by the City's Donations Policy.
- 3.3. For purposes of corporate consistency, this policy shall apply to all City divisions and to those agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs) which are by law subject to the policies of City Council by requiring that those ABCs adopt policies which are consistent with this policy. Approval of proposals would continue to be by the ABC or, if such authority is not delegated to the ABC, by City Council. All other ABCs are requested to adopt policies which are consistent with this policy. The authority for street naming under this policy shall remain solely with the City.
- 3.4. This policy does not apply retroactively. Naming arrangements that pre-date this policy are not subject to its terms.
- 3.5. Subject to existing arrangements and this policy, any property or street may be considered for naming. Naming proposals will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

4.1. For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- 4.1.1. “Corporate Naming Rights” shall mean a mutually beneficial business arrangement wherein an organization provides goods, services or financial support to the City in return for access to the commercial and/or marketing potential associated with the public display of the organization's name on a City property for a finite period. Examples include the City-owned Sony Centre for the Performing Arts and the Scotiabank Nuit Blanche arts event.
- 4.1.2. "Duplicate" refers to street names that are identical but does not include their type or direction. (eg. Street, Avenue, East). For example, Jackson Avenue and Jackson Place or Bloor Street East and Bloor Street West would be duplicates. Conversely, Jackson Avenue and Albert Jackson Lane or Simcoe Street and Lower Simcoe Street would not be duplicates.
- 4.1.3. “Honourific Naming” shall mean the honourific or commemorative naming of property without the receipt of consideration by the City. It is bestowed by the City to recognize the outstanding service, commitment or contribution of an individual or group. The J.J. Piccininni Community Centre is but one example. Furthermore, an honourific or commemorative naming may be conferred on an organization that has made such a substantial donation that naming is considered to be an appropriate acknowledgement.
- 4.1.4. “Individual Naming Rights” shall mean the naming of City property in return for a financial or in-kind contribution from an individual or their estate. Typically, such support is given to enhance the community and to help sustain the property in question for a negotiated period of time. An example is the Martin Goodman Trail.
- 4.1.5. “Properties” refers to City assets. These include, but are not limited to, events, services, programs, activities, real property, facilities, parks, features (e.g. rooms, ice pads, bridges, playgrounds, etc.), and other assets.
- 4.1.6. “Similar Sounding” refers to street names that sound similar in their entirety, but does not include their type or direction. For example, Perly Lane and Purley Lane or Peach Avenue and Beach Avenue would be similar because each name sounds similar in its entirety. Conversely, Apple Hill Road and Apple Road or Jackson Avenue and Albert Jackson Lane or Sunnyview Lane and Sunnysdale Road would not be similar because each name does not sound similar in its entirety.

- 4.1.7. "Streets" as used in this policy shall refer to City streets or lanes and shall include private streets which the City has the legal jurisdiction to name or rename.

## **5. PRINCIPLES**

### **5.1. General**

- 5.1.1. This policy repeals and supplants all existing in-force City policies and guidelines on naming, including the City of Toronto Street Naming Policy, as amended, and the Naming and Renaming of Parks and Recreation Facilities Policy.
- 5.1.2. The names of properties and streets recognizing individuals or organizations cannot be altered without the express authorization of the relevant Community Council. The re-naming of properties and streets will only be pursued in exceptional circumstances and be considered within the context of the historical and/or community significance of the existing name. The re-naming of streets could be considered if it is determined that re-naming will improve the City's administration of essential services and that it would be in the public's best interests.
- 5.1.3. The cost and impact of changing existing signage, rebuilding community recognition and updating records must be considered before a property or street is re-named.
- 5.1.4. Property and street namings are at the sole discretion of the City.
- 5.1.5. All ward-specific property and street namings in compliance with this policy require the approval of the relevant Community Council with the exception of street namings on a plan of subdivision where approval from Community Council may not be required.
- 5.1.6. The City shall retain ownership and control over any named property, unless another party has explicit lawful rights to the property.
- 5.1.7. The City will consider naming proposals, but is under no obligation to accept them or to present them for consideration.
- 5.1.8. The duration of the property or street naming is at the sole discretion of the City and may be revoked and the property or street re-named at any time.
- 5.1.9. In considering the naming of a property or street after an individual, priority will be given to those who have made a sustained and lasting contribution to



the local community or to the City of Toronto, Canada and the world.

- 5.1.10. The physical display of the name shall be at the purview of the City.
- 5.1.11. The City does not endorse the products, services, or ideas of any named party.
- 5.1.12. The local councillor shall be notified with respect to ward- specific property or street naming proposals.
- 5.1.13. Councillors may introduce honourific naming proposals affecting their wards at Community Council
- 5.1.14. Division Heads have overall responsibility for oversight and control of property and street naming and renaming in their units.

## 5.2. Eligibility and Criteria

- 5.2.1. The City shall not grant a naming without the informed written consent of the named party (i.e. individual, group or organization) or the named party's representative (e.g. estate or next-of-kin).
- 5.2.2. Named parties are prohibited from implying that their products, services or ideas are sanctioned by the City.
- 5.2.3. The naming must not result in, or be perceived to confer, any competitive advantage, benefit or preferential treatment to the named party or, in the case of a street, to a development, product or service located, produced or provided on the street, or in the community.
- 5.2.4. There shall be no actual or implied obligation on the City's part to purchase the product or services of the named party.
- 5.2.5. Subject to the agreement, the naming must not impair the City's ability to manage the property, if the City has rights to manage the property.
- 5.2.6. The naming must not unduly detract from the character, integrity or aesthetic quality of the property or unreasonably interfere with its enjoyment or use.
- 5.2.7. The naming must not confer a personal benefit to any particular City employee or City official.

- 5.2.8. Naming must not result in additional costs for the City. Any costs associated with an unsolicited naming proposal will be the responsibility of the applicant.

## **6. PROCEDURE**

The following process has been established to ensure that the naming or renaming of a City property or street is approached in a consistent manner. Issues regarding the interpretation or application of this policy and process are to be referred to the Toronto Office of Partnerships, with the exception of matters respecting the naming of streets, which shall be referred to the Executive Director, Engineering & Construction Services.

### **6.1. Naming of Properties and Streets**

- 6.1.1. In line with current practice, for the naming of ward-specific properties and streets, division staff shall only recommend names that:

- 6.1.1.1. Subject to the provisions of section 6.3.5, and after consulting with the local community and councillor, are determined to have general public support,
- 6.1.1.2. engender a strong positive image;
- 6.1.1.3. have historical, cultural or social significance to the community, City of Toronto, Canada and the world;
- 6.1.1.4. are unique, to avoid confusion;
- 6.1.1.5. do not lend themselves to inappropriate abbreviations or acronyms; and
- 6.1.1.6. comply with this policy;

- 6.1.2. Streets should generally be named after people, places, events and things related to the City and citizens of Toronto, Canada and the world. Proposed names should meet one of the following criteria:

- 6.1.2.1. to honour and commemorate noteworthy persons associated with the City of Toronto, Canada and the world;
- 6.1.2.2. to commemorate local history, places, events or culture;
- 6.1.2.3. to strengthen neighbourhood identity; or
- 6.1.2.4. to recognize native wildlife, flora, fauna or natural features related to the community and the City of Toronto.

- 6.1.3. Consideration should be given to names of local area or historic significance.

- 6.1.4. Upon concluding its due diligence, the division will report to the relevant Community Council with the recommended property name.

6.2. Requests for the Honourific Naming/Renaming of City Properties (Other than Streets)

6.2.1. Any individual, group or organization may submit an honourific naming proposal to name or rename eligible City property.

6.2.2. Ward specific honourific naming proposals will be considered by the appropriate Community Council.

6.2.3. Honourific naming proposals that are city-wide in scope will be considered by the Mayor's Office and will require City Council approval.

6.2.4. All requests for the honourific naming or renaming of a City property shall be made in writing to the appropriate Division Head (or designate) or the Toronto Office of Partnerships, which will then refer the request to the appropriate division.

6.2.5. In considering a naming request, divisions may, at their discretion, utilize additional criteria beyond those noted in this policy and may assess fees for the purposes of cost recovery.

6.2.6. Requests should contain the following minimum information:

6.2.6.1. The proposed name;

6.2.6.2. Reasons for the proposed name, including documentation of that person or entity's significance and contribution to the community, city or country;

6.2.6.3. Written documentation indicating community support for the proposed name. For a proposal to be eligible for consideration, the applicant must secure the endorsement of at least two community organizations, as defined by the applicable division;

6.2.6.4. Description/map showing location and boundaries of the property; and

6.2.6.5. If proposing to re-name a property, include justification for changing an established name. Names that have become widely accepted by the community will not be abandoned unless there are compelling reasons and strong public sentiment from the broader community for doing so.

6.2.7. Upon receipt, community and other relevant stakeholders, including the local councillor, shall be consulted on all naming/renaming proposals.

6.2.8. Each proposal will then be considered by a staff-led review that, as part of its due diligence, shall at a minimum:

6.2.8.1. review the proposed request for its adherence to this policy.

- 6.2.8.2. ensure that supporting information has been authenticated, particularly when an individual's name is proposed.
  - 6.2.8.3. conduct an independent background check on the individual, group or organization presented for naming.
  - 6.2.8.4. consult with, and take into consideration the comments of, all interested stakeholders.
- 6.2.9. Staff will then present, within 90 days of the submission, a recommendation to the Division Head (or designate) who may either accept or reject the proposal. The Division Head may also seek to convene a public meeting to gain additional information prior to making a decision.
- 6.2.10. The Division Head/designate shall communicate the recommendation and its reasons to the applicant.
- 6.2.11. Where a proposal is recommended, the division shall report it to the appropriate Community Council for consideration.

### 6.3. Requests for the Naming/Renaming of Streets

- 6.3.1. Names may be proposed for the naming or renaming of streets, subject to the following:
- 6.3.1.1. Duplicate and Similar Sounding names shall be rejected.
  - 6.3.1.2. Names objected to by Toronto Fire Services, Toronto Police Service or Toronto Emergency Medical Services shall be rejected.
  - 6.3.1.3. The Deputy City Manager, Cluster B, has authority to make a final determination with names referred to in section 6.3.1.1 and 6.3.1.2.
  - 6.3.1.4. Corrupted or modified names, or names which are discriminatory or derogatory from the point of view of race, sex, colour, creed, political affiliation or other social factors shall not be considered.
- 6.3.2. All applications for naming or renaming streets shall be made in writing to the Executive Director, Engineering & Construction Services. The application should include the proposed name(s), the specific street location(s) including plans, sketches and drawings and brief but complete background information on the proposed name(s). The Executive Director, Engineering & Construction Services or his/her designate shall determine the appropriate street type designation (e.g. avenue, boulevard, trail, terrace, crescent, etc.) and/or qualifier (e.g. east, west, etc.) for a proposed name.
- 6.3.3. In the case of a name change, the application should also include a petition with name, address and signatures of all of the persons who reside on or own property that fronts on or is adjacent to the subject street.

- 6.3.4. The Executive Director, Engineering & Construction Services or his/her designate shall review the proposed name(s) for compliance and, if found to be compliant shall circulate proposed name(s) to the affected Councillors, Toronto Fire Services, Toronto Police Service, Toronto Emergency Medical Services, and preservation panels.
- 6.3.5. Where the name(s) is proposed to be established by registration of a plan of subdivision, the following shall apply:
- 6.3.5.1. Should the proposed name(s) of the new streets be acceptable to all parties referenced in 6.3.4, the Executive Director, Engineering & Construction Services or his/her designate may, where the name is to be established by registered plan of subdivision, authorize inclusion of the name(s) on the plan of subdivision; and
  - 6.3.5.2. If the proposed street name(s) on a draft plan of subdivision application do not have approval from all parties referenced in 6.3.4, the Executive Director, Engineering & Construction Services or his/her designate shall report on the proposed name(s) to Community Council for its consideration.
- 6.3.6. Where the name(s) is proposed to be established by by-law, the Executive Director, Engineering & Construction Services or his/her designate shall report to Community Council for consideration. Notice shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of Municipal Code Chapter 162, "Notice, Public".
- 6.3.7. Recommendations by City staff for naming or renaming proposals which are initiated by staff or are requests for the approval of property or street naming which are not within the scope of this policy shall be referred to Community Council for appropriate action, which may include recommendation to City Council for approval, with the exception of Duplicate or Similar Sounding names or names objected to by Toronto Fire Services, Toronto Police Service or Toronto Emergency Medical Services.

## **7. RELATED POLICIES**

- 7.1. The City's Donations Policy can be found at:  
[http://www.toronto.ca/top/pdf/donation\\_policy.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/top/pdf/donation_policy.pdf)
- 7.2. The Code of Conduct for Members of Toronto City Council is available at:  
[http://www.toronto.ca/city\\_council/pdf/members\\_code\\_conduct.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/city_council/pdf/members_code_conduct.pdf)
- 7.3. Lobbyist Code of Conduct, Municipal Code Chapter 140, Article VI  
[http://www.toronto.ca/lobbying/code\\_conduct.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/lobbying/code_conduct.htm)

7.4. Lobbying and Donations to Council member-Organized Community Events Joint Interpretation Bulletin  
[http://www.toronto.ca/lobbying/pdf/interpretation\\_bulletin.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/lobbying/pdf/interpretation_bulletin.pdf)