

# City of Toronto Property Naming Policy

Substantive changes to current version of policy are underlined for reference.

## 1. Policy Statement

City Properties are an important fabric of the community. The names of City Properties may reflect a given property's characteristics; indicate the unique location, geography, or community where the property is located; commemorate individuals, communities, organizations, events, and ideas of significance to Toronto, Ontario or Canada; and/or recognize Indigenous Peoples' past, present, and future presence on the land.

This Policy establishes the criteria and process to name or rename a City Property.

This Policy does not apply in the following situations:

- When naming or renaming City Properties in return for financial or in-kind contributions, including sponsorships, in which case the City of Toronto Individual and Corporate Naming Rights Policy applies
- When naming City Streets, in which case the City of Toronto Street Naming Policy applies

This Policy also does not apply to memorials, events, or fee-for-service programs, such as the Commemorative Tree and Bench Program.

## 2. Definitions

2.1 *City* refers to the City of Toronto.

2.2 *City Property* refers to any City owned real property or significant related assets including, but not limited to, community centres, shelters, childcare centres, water treatment plants, and parks. Additionally, unless otherwise stated in this Policy, any reference to City Property in this Policy includes Property Features.

2.3 *City-wide Significance* refers to having a significant social or cultural impact for residents in more than one Community Council area.

2.4 *Commemorative Name* is a name assigned to a property to commemorate one or more individuals, communities, organizations, events, or ideas of significance to Toronto, Ontario or Canada. Names in an Indigenous language and/or that recognize Indigenous Peoples' past, present, and future presence on the land are treated as commemorative for the purposes of this policy.

2.5 *Draft Plan of Subdivision* is a document that shows the surveyed boundaries, location, size, and Streets of a proposed subdivision.

2.6 *Duplicate* refers to names that are identical or similar sounding in their entirety.

- 2.7 *Economic Development and Culture* refers to the City of Toronto's Economic Development and Culture Division or its successor.
- 2.8 *First Responders* refers to Toronto Fire Services, Toronto Police Service, and Toronto Paramedic Services.
- 2.9 *Naming* is officially assigning a name to, or renaming, a City Property.
- 2.10 *New Property* refers to any City-owned properties proposed on a new Draft Plan of Subdivision, a property acquired by the City, or a significant new asset constructed on City Property, including but not limited to community centres, shelters, childcare centres, water treatment plants, and parks.
- 2.11 *Property Development and Capital Project Planning* refers to the process undertaken by City staff to plan for and design a new City Property or facility, including consultations with the public and the Ward Councillor. This process concludes at the beginning of the property or facility's construction document preparation phase.
- 2.12 *Property Features* refer to amenities or assets within or on a City Property, including but not limited to, playgrounds, sports fields, gazebos, trails, multi-purpose rooms, gymnasiums, and ice pads.
- 2.13 *Ravine* shall have the meaning prescribed in Chapter 658, Ravine and Natural Feature Protection, of the Toronto Municipal Code.
- 2.14 *Wayfinding Name* is a name assigned to a City Property for navigational and functional purposes, including but not limited to a description of the property's location, function, or features.
- 2.15 *Woodlands* shall have the meaning prescribed in Section 658, Ravine and Natural Feature Protection, of the Toronto Municipal Code.
- 3. Criteria to Name or Rename a City Property**
- 3.1 Names of City Properties will facilitate navigation to and from a property and will either:
- 3.1.1 Indicate the location and/or features of the City Property; or
- 3.1.2 Commemorate one or more individuals, communities, organizations, events, or ideas of significance to Toronto, Ontario or Canada, in accordance with the Guiding Principles for Commemoration.
- 3.2 Proposed names in an Indigenous language or a Commemorative Name recognizing an Indigenous individual, organization, event or concept will require consultation with Indigenous communities and adherence to appropriate Indigenous practices or protocols.

- 3.3 The duration of the property name is at the sole discretion of the City and may be revoked or the City Property may be renamed.
- 3.4 City Property names shall not impair the ability of First Responders to respond to emergencies or impair the City's ability to deliver services.
- 3.5 City Properties that have been named or renamed or whose names have been reviewed in the previous ten years will generally not be renamed or reviewed, unless necessary for safety or operational purposes.
- 3.6 The City will not rename ravines, woodlands and other ecological features, unless renamed in an Indigenous language and in consultation with Indigenous communities and Indigenous rights-holders.
- 3.7 Names of City Properties shall not:
  - 3.7.1 Result in, or be perceived to confer, any competitive advantage, benefit or preferential treatment or advertisement to the named party, or a development, product, service or a particular business;
  - 3.7.2 Be or be perceived to be discriminatory or derogatory of race, colour, ethnic origin, gender identity or expression, sex, sexual orientation, creed, political affiliation, disability or other social factors;
  - 3.7.3 Result in inappropriate abbreviations or acronyms;
  - 3.7.4 Duplicate another named City Property;
  - 3.7.5 Unduly detract from the character, integrity of the community or aesthetic quality of the property or unreasonable interference with its enjoyment or use;
  - 3.7.6 Place the City in conflict with any agreements established in the acquisition or management of the City Property; and
  - 3.7.7 Make a direct or indirect reference to recent events or recently deceased individuals, except where the event or the individual had a legacy of significant contributions to the City of Toronto. Names of recent events or recently deceased individuals may be considered after two years.
- 3.8 Naming or renaming a City Property on behalf of an individual, event or organization requires the written consent of the named party or the named party's representative.
  - 3.8.1 In circumstances where consent has not been received, the City, in the absence of any refusal to provide consent or legal concerns, may approve the name if it is satisfied that reasonable efforts have been made to obtain consent.

- 3.9 Property Features within City Properties should only be assigned Wayfinding Names in order to maintain straightforward identification of, and navigation to and from, these amenities by the public.
- 3.10 The design and content of the signage for City Properties must comply with the City Corporate Identity Program and the physical location of the sign shall be at determined by the City.
- 3.11 A proposed name that does not meet all of the criteria listed in Sections 3.1 – 3.10 of this Policy requires City Council approval.

#### **4. Naming New City Properties**

- 4.1 The Division Head responsible for a new City Property will consult the Ward Councillor about potential Wayfinding Names during the Property Development and Capital Project Planning process.
- 4.2 Potential commemorative property names identified during the Property Development and Capital Project Planning process will be considered by Economic Development and Culture, in consultation with the Division responsible for the property, to determine alignment with the City's Guiding Principles for Commemoration.
- 4.3 At the completion of the Property Development and Capital Project Planning process, the Division Head responsible for a new City Property will assign a Wayfinding Name, unless Economic Development and Culture has confirmed a Commemorative Name that demonstrably meets all criteria in Section 3.
- 4.3.1 Economic Development and Culture will submit a Commemorative Name for approval by the relevant Community Council (or City Council if it affects more than one Community Council or, in the opinion of the City Manager, has City-wide Significance).
- 4.4 The Division Head responsible for a new City Property may also assign Wayfinding Names that meet the criteria in Section 3 of this Policy to Property Features within or on that property.

#### **5. Renaming City Properties**

- 5.1. A Division Head responsible for a property may update the existing Wayfinding Name of an existing City Property for safety or operational purposes.
- 5.2. The public may submit a proposal to rename a City Property that currently has a Wayfinding Name with a new Commemorative Name. The City will consider such proposals but is under no obligation to accept a proposed name.
- 5.3. Proposals to assign a new Commemorative Name to an existing City Property must be made using the City Property Naming Form and at minimum is to include:

- 5.3.1. The current name and address of the City Property;
- 5.3.2. The proposed Commemorative Name for the City Property;
- 5.3.3. The rationale for the proposed Commemorative Name and how the Commemorative Name aligns with the Guiding Principles for Commemoration; and
- 5.3.4. Documented support from the community, including but not limited to petitions and support letters.
- 5.4. Economic Development and Culture, working with the Division Head responsible for the property and other Divisions as appropriate, will review the proposal, consult with the Ward Councillor, and may conduct additional research and/or public consultations to determine public support for the proposal, if required.
- 5.5. Economic Development and Culture, working with the Division Head responsible for the property, will bring forward the proposed name(s) for consideration to the relevant Community Council, (or City Council if it affects more than one Community Council or has City-wide Significance).

## **6. Requests to Review Commemorative Property Names**

- 6.1 The City will consider requests to review a Commemorative Name of a City Property where the name:
  - 6.1.1 Refers to current or historic persons known for their discriminatory views and actions, including committing or perpetuating acts of racism or violence against Indigenous Peoples and Black communities, and/or equity-deserving groups;
  - 6.1.2 Includes derogatory terms that might represent or be linked with discriminatory views and actions;
  - 6.1.3 Negatively represents or appropriates the culture of Indigenous Peoples, Black communities, and/or equity-deserving groups;
  - 6.1.4 Is inconsistent with City By-laws or policies including the City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment / Discrimination Policy; and of
  - 6.1.5 Brings the City of Toronto into disrepute.
- 6.2 Requests from the public to review the name of a City Property must be made using the City Property Name Review Form and at minimum is to include:
  - 6.2.1 The name and address of the City Property;

- 6.2.2 Rationale for reviewing the property name based on criteria outlined in Section 6.1 of this Policy and the City's Guiding Principles for Commemoration; and
- 6.2.3 Documented support from the community, including but not limited to petitions and support letters.
- 6.3 Economic Development and Culture, working with the Division Head responsible for the property and other Divisions as appropriate and in consultation with the Ward Councillor, will review the request and recommend one of the following responses:
  - 6.3.1 Recommend to City Council that the City Property be renamed;
  - 6.3.2 Install signage, plaques or other interpretive materials to provide information to the public about the cultural and/or historical context of the property name;
  - 6.3.3 Conclude that no action is required; or
  - 6.3.4 Identify another action supported by residents.
- 6.4 If required, Economic Development and Culture may request additional information from the applicant and/or conduct additional research and/or public consultations to determine the appropriate response to the request.
- 6.5 Authority to rename a City Property for any of the reasons outlined in Section 6.1 of this Policy must be sought from City Council.

## **7. Related City By-laws and Policies**

- 7.1 [City of Toronto Guiding Principles for Commemoration](#)
- 7.2 [City of Toronto Street Naming Policy](#)
- 7.3 [Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 27, Council Procedures](#)
- 7.4 [Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 658, Ravine and Natural Feature Protection](#)
- 7.5 [City of Toronto Individual and Corporate Naming Rights Policy](#)
- 7.6 [City of Toronto Sponsorship Policy](#)
- 7.7 [City of Toronto Donations Policy](#)
- 7.8 [Commemorative Tree and Bench Program](#)
- 7.9 [Corporate Identity Program](#)