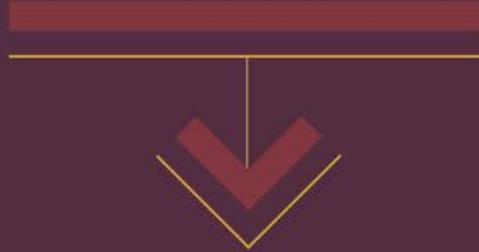


Advancing a fair and just world, raising
others up as we rise.



Final Report for the Recognition Review Project

Learnings from Community Dialogues,
Youth Artist Co-Design Process, & Panel Discussion

February - May 2022

Submitted by: Monumental Projects

Submitted to: City of Toronto (Tkaronto)

Submitted on: June 15, 2022 (final draft)

In partnership with:



Land Acknowledgement

The land we are standing on today is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

We also acknowledge that Toronto (Tkaronto) is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississauga and Chippewa bands.

We also take this time to acknowledge the water that flows through and across the territory.

Many of us have come here as settlers, immigrants, newcomers in this generation or generations past. We would like to also acknowledge those of us who came here forcibly, particularly as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade. Therefore, we honour and pay tribute to the ancestors of African Origin and Descent.

[“The Sound of Flavour” by micha the happie](#)

**L'Chaim Metta i & i OM
Ase
Flames & Flavours
-seeking refuge
Someone's child, parent, partner
Threads sewn through stained blood
Ancient roots
Immigrant land
Nations nurtured here before
The human they named
The being the same home
When we arrived at first
we all bear the lost of our own kindred lands
Now we rejoice -
celebrating spirits dance from different sands.
Tears - washes us light
Romance the now
as village living becomes the joy of being alive.
We belonged here before our first breath
Northern nature chirps and cycles -
let the sounds of birds, squirrels
wind and grass
Eat up the deliciousness of the interdependency of our past.
L'Chaim Metta i & i OM
Ase.¹**

[Watch the video here.](#)

¹ Learn more about the contributing artists and art pieces in [Appendix A. Youth Artist Co-Design Session Summary.](#)



**What histories,
communities, and
ways of being would
you like to see
commemorated in
Toronto?**

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The street names are important for bringing people into space. This is important because growing up, many of the street names left us feeling like we were not meant to be there.

Dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through NABC

The name of a street or a building can represent the values of the person who lived there.

Dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through NABC

Is this the right way to spend public dollars, or would it be better used in housing and social services? Naming a street or a community centre would only be the beginning. More must be done for communities.

Dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH



[“Trading Places” by dairysam](#)

Medium: Comic

Trading Places is a comic and illustration about change through conversations. Through an ideal and fantasy world of nature and trading where people and nature are the priority; there are characters discussing what is commemorated now, as well as in the past and future. The questions are more broad. For me, art, culture, parks and places of such manner need to be commemorated but also prioritized more. For the viewer, it's a thought through this fantasy land - what do you want to be commemorated? What is your fantasy land?²

² Learn more about the contributing artists and art pieces in [Appendix B. Youth Artist Co-Design Session Summary](#).

Executive Summary

This report explores a community engagement process designed by Monumental Projects and our partners to seek feedback on the *Draft City of Toronto Principles for Commemoration in the Public Realm*. From February to May 2022, our process included the following activities:

- community dialogues with equity-deserving groups, co-led through grassroots organizations, trusted entities, and governing bodies (34 participants);
- a youth artist co-design process (4 youth artists, 1 elder artist); and
- a panel discussion exploring commemoration in the public realm (86 registrants, 4 panelists).

The approach was intentionally designed to encourage deep, nuanced, and honest dialogues with equity-deserving groups. We designed the dialogues to be intimate spaces, no more than ten participants per event to ensure everyone had the opportunity to share and hear their peers. The goal was to create intimate, culturally competent spaces to elevate the voices of participants and give them the space and time to share their own reflections and build on those of their peers. To reach specific equity-deserving groups, we collaborated with community-based organizations that have deep trust within the equity-deserving groups they serve, to co-host the events alongside Monumental and our partners, Nbisiing Consulting and Gary Newman and associates.

After a description of the larger context of the Recognition Review work at the City of Toronto and our process, we explore key recommendations, comments, and observations gathered from our partners, community leaders, organizations, Indigenous rights-holders, panelists, and artists. We found that some existing principles could be combined: Co-Creation could be combined with Demonstrated Community Support and Engagement, and Historical and Community Research could be combined with Relevance to Toronto. The language in Indigenous Place-Keeping and Diversity Our Strength can be strengthened by replacing references to “should” with “will”, and more detail should be added to describe specific Indigenous protocols and community-led processes (co-developed with community organizations and Indigenous rights-holders). We suggest three new principles: Make It Educational, Recognize that Communities Already Commemorate, and Don't Wait to Commemorate.

In addition to our recommendations about the Guiding Principles, we have also included recommendations to more broadly improve future engagement processes, with a focus on equity-deserving groups. These recommendations arose from limitations and tensions that were unearthed during the planning and delivery of the work, and surfaced as a point of discussion in many of the Community Dialogues, including: rapid timelines limiting meaningful community engagement, decolonizing the consultation process, expanding what is included in the formal commemoration process, and considerations around supporting equity-deserving groups in Toronto with resources more broadly. We document this to support the City of Toronto to continue to improve on their practices around equity-centred engagement.

It should be highlighted that most footnoted items are direct references from the co-developed summaries of the Community Dialogues, as a way to avoid the bias that can emerge through paraphrasing the words of our partners and participants.

Throughout the report, you will find artwork, quotes, and dialogue questions to help the reader connect with the content and tone of our process. We invite each reader to individually reflect on the art pieces, participant comments, and conversation prompts, and to continue the dialogue. The report concludes with more detailed meeting records, co-developed with our partners, community organizations, and participants.

We are grateful for the opportunity to co-develop this record with our partners and extended community. We hope this collection of stories and community knowledge will make an impact and are grateful to all the individuals who contributed.

About Monumental

Monumental works to advance fair, just and culturally competent city-building and urban development, with a focus of elevating leadership of racialized citybuilders. We help organizations deepen their social impact and embed an equity lens into their work, ensuring that social equity, community participation, and prosperity for all are core strategic imperatives. We work closely with vital city building institutions across Canada, with a specific focus on amplifying the voices and leadership of equity-deserving communities.

Introduction

Names matter. In the world, our individual names tell the story of who we are. They identify our communities and families. In our cities, names tell a collective story, of who we are, what we value, and ultimately, who's stories we believe to be worthy of remembering.

For too long in the City of Toronto (Tkaronto), and so many other cities across Canada, names of streets, monuments, and public buildings have not adequately represented the plurality of beliefs, stories, and histories of our city. They've failed to recognize the Indigenous rights-holders, who have stewarded and cared for the land since time immemorial. Names have bypassed the stories of Black, racialized and other equity-deserving groups. Toronto (Tkaronto) upholds "Diversity, Our Strength" as a core value, yet only small traces of our diversity are recognized in our city-owned assets. Still, we are one of the most diverse cities in the world.

"Toronto is a collection of villages [...] I don't think there is room in our collective understanding for all of those stories to sit side by side and all of those images to stand together and it doesn't mean that we are cancelling anyone or erasing anyone but we are acknowledging the tremendous breadth of humanity. And this is what I believe children need to see and they need to learn to reflect in the world. If Toronto has a gift to give out of the diversity that we have, surely it's something that's tied up with that."

Bonnie Devine during the Our City, Our Stories panel discussion

At a time of so many competing interests for the City's resources, why do names matter?

Names signal to us that we - and our histories - are seen and witnessed. When we feel seen, when we feel like we are visible, when we feel recognized, it begins the process of shifting how we engage with spaces, places, people, and potentially the institutions that make up our City. It doesn't do the work of providing affordable housing, access to opportunities, transit, social infrastructure - but it begins the process of recognizing that we are valued in our place of residence. It acknowledges our histories, stories, values, and ways of knowing and being. Renaming is the start of the journey towards a more equitable city.

Despite the lack of recognition, communities are commemorating. In conversation with Indigenous rights-holders, we learned about name-giving traditions. With 2SLGBTQ+ community members, we learned about sacred fires held on the Trans Day of Remembrance to honour those lost. Across all dialogues, we heard about the informal names that places get when they hold meaning for communities. For the City of Toronto (Tkaronto), we think it is critically important to recognize that the presence of existing commemoration and recognition rituals and ceremonies among Toronto (Tkaronto) communities mean that the work ahead should involve listening to and working in solidarity with communities that are already honouring the beings and creatures, ancestors, and histories that matter most to them.

“Naming, is an incredible way to anchor one in community. But I also believe that we need to remember that community is extended to all beings in the natural world. All beings are our kin, all beings are our relatives, and we live in a working relationship with every aspect of the natural world.”

Elder Catherine Tàmmaro during the Our City, Our Stories panel discussion

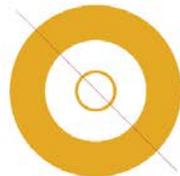
The communities we spoke to told stories of how they commemorate, what they commemorate, and across almost all, talked about how we don't do enough to recognize all of these beings around us - the natural world - as an integral actor in our civic experience. One youth participant noted that to commemorate in a way that connects us all, we should “begin and end with the land.” Let us commemorate not just buildings and streets, but the natural world. Let us commemorate not just people, but ideas and nature.

Education is critically important to recognition processes. Each group talked about documenting the story of how something got named, why things get renamed, and embedding public education as part of the journey of recognition. To simply rename without documenting the history does a disservice to future generations' understanding of the collective efforts towards change, equity, and reconciliation.

We are grateful for the opportunity to co-develop this record with our partners and extended community. We hope this collection of stories and community knowledge will make an impact and are grateful to all the individuals who contributed.

It's about creating spaces, creating a sense of ownership, building pride and knowledge, and making Black culture alive for those who are coming up behind.

Dialogue with Black community leaders and organizations through NABC



How should the process of commemoration feel?

Context

Note: This section is an excerpt from City of Toronto's "[Draft Principles for the Commemoration in the Public Realm](#)" document.

As a first step in the development of a new commemorative framework for Toronto (Tkaronto), City staff have prepared draft guiding principles for commemoration in the public realm based on initial findings from the Recognition Review, and best practices from other global cities.

1. Overview

The Principles for Commemoration are intended to inform how the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) commemorates public figures, places, and events in tangible physical assets located on City property in the public realm, with a focus on encouraging greater equity and inclusion in place-making, promoting a broader understanding of history and its legacy on communities, and confronting the legacy of colonialism and systemic racism.

Commemoration is an intentional act of acknowledging the memory of people, places, events and ideas. It can include positive and honorific celebrations of people, places and events, as well as the tragic, controversial and shameful dimensions of history. Acts of public commemoration – including the naming of streets, parks and other civic properties, and representation in monuments and plaques – reflect community values through how we choose to collectively honour the past.

The City of Toronto (Tkaronto) communicates a core value through its motto, "Diversity Our Strength". However, most commemorations in Toronto (Tkaronto) represent the stories of certain ethno-racial groups, genders, and socioeconomic classes, namely settler white males in positions of power. This historic imbalance has meant that other stories – including those of Indigenous and Black communities, women, 2SLGBTQ+ persons, and other equity-deserving groups – are underrepresented in Toronto (Tkaronto)'s urban fabric. A new approach to the commemoration of untold stories can foster greater equity and inclusion in place-making, leading to more welcoming public spaces, and a stronger sense of belonging for all.

2. Scope

The Principles for Commemoration in the Public Realm will guide the development, review and application of City policies and programs related to commemoration through tangible physical assets on City property. This includes policies and programs related to the naming and renaming of streets, parks, community centres and other civic facilities, the acquisition

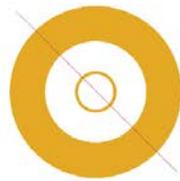
of new and stewardship of existing commemorative works in the City's public art and monuments collection, and interpretive plaque programs.

Forms of commemoration that are outside the scope of the principles include:

- Civic honours, awards and tributes
- Assets named in the context of sponsorships or donations, unless the proposed name or asset commemorates an historic figure or event
- Fee-for-service programs such as the Commemorative Tree and Bench Program
- Community-initiated memorials that are not owned or managed by the City
- Temporary community-initiated recognitions, including flag raising
- Programs commemorating the death of those who have lost their lives in the line of duty

3. Draft Principles

The principles are intended to guide decision-making and priority-setting for any commemorative work undertaken by the City that falls under the scope of this policy. Public engagement on the draft principles occurred in 2022. The results will inform the development of and/or revisions to the City's policies on commemoration.



Who should participate in commemoration?

Approach

In February 2022, Monumental Projects and our partners began an engagement with the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) to support the [Recognition Review](#). The Recognition Review is a City-led project to establish new [principles](#) and processes to guide commemoration activities in Toronto (Tkaronto). Our team was engaged to:

- A. Design and host a **series of dialogues with community leaders and organizations from equity-deserving groups** in Toronto (e.g., Black, Indigenous, racialized, and 2SLGBTQ+communities) to explore the draft principles for commemoration and gather feedback to help shape a new version of the principles;
- B. Design and host a **youth artist co-design session** to create art pieces and statements about commemoration in Toronto (Tkaronto);
- C. Design and host a public **panel discussion**, titled [Our City, Our Stories: A panel discussion about commemoration in the public realm](#); and
- D. Advise on the design of a **public survey** to gather feedback from a large group of residents.

A. Community Dialogues

We designed the dialogues to be intimate discussion spaces, working with community organizations to identify leaders who represent a wide range of communities in Toronto (Tkaronto). Each community dialogue was designed to host approximately 5-10 people, to ensure ample opportunity for in-depth contributions from each participant. We engaged a total of 34 participants. The dialogues hosted during Feb - May 2022 are a beginning point for a deeper process of community engagement and co-development.

By the end of our process, we hosted four (4) dialogues with community leaders and organizations from equity-deserving communities in Toronto (Tkaronto) and two (2) dialogues with First Nations rights-holders in the territory: the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN), and the Huron-Wendat Nation (HWN). We were unable to schedule a dialogue with Six Nations of the Grand River, who are also rights-holders in Toronto (Tkaronto). We are aware of this gap in engagement. The City has committed to engagement them separately to ensure their feedback is incorporated into any recommendations to City Council.

Each community dialogue opened with some context-setting about the [Recognition Review](#) and the [Draft Principles for Commemoration in the Public Realm](#). This was followed by a brief Q&A period. We then moved into an open dialogue where everyone responded to prompts about both the process of commemoration and what should be commemorated, and reflected on the thoughts of their peers. The themes of the conversations included:

- What histories, communities, and ways of being would you like to see commemorated in Toronto (Tkaronto)?
- What does it feel like to see a history you care about honoured?
- How do you commemorate in your community?
- What should the process of commemoration look like?
- How should the process of commemoration feel?
- Who should be involved in the commemoration process?
- Do any principles stand out to you? Do they resonate? Would you change them?

Session summaries for each community dialogue are available in **Appendix B. Community Dialogue Summaries**.

Community Leaders & Organizations

1. A dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community leaders and organizations was co-led by Benjamin Bongolan (Monumental Projects) and Karlene Williams Clarke (The 519) on April 13, 2022. Based on Church Street, [the 519](#) is committed to the health, happiness and full participation of the 2SLGBTQ+ communities. A City of Toronto (Tkaronto) agency with an innovative model of Service, Space and Leadership, 519 strives to make a real difference in people's lives, while working to promote inclusion, understanding and respect.
2. A leadership dialogue with members of the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC) was led by Bob Goulais (Nbsiing Consulting) on April 19, 2022. [TASSC](#), which consists of 19 Indigenous-led agencies and organizations across the City, is the leading not-for-profit research, policy, and advocacy organisation that addresses the social determinants of health to improve and enhance the socio-economic prospects and cultural well-being of Indigenous peoples living in the City of Toronto (Tkaronto).
3. A dialogue with Black community leaders and organizations was co-led by Gary A Newman and associates Knowledge and Tenisha Blair, in partnership with the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC) on April 26, 2022. [NABC](#) aspires in building a strong Black community sector in Toronto (Tkaronto) by enabling the conditions for network convening, knowledge mobilization, service coordination, capacity building, research, and systems change.
4. A dialogue with Diverse Youth community leaders and organizations was co-led by Gary A Newman and associates Knowledge and Tenisha Blair, in partnership with the Students Commission of Canada (SCC) on April 28, 2022. Based just east of Queen's Park, the [Students Commission of Canada](#) is a charitable organization that purposefully works with others to ensure that young people are valued, heard and their ideas for improving themselves, the lives of their peers and communities are put into action.

First Nations Rights-Holders

5. A dialogue with members of the Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee was led by Bob Goulais (Nbisiing Consulting) on April 27, 2022. The MCFN Culture and Design Advisory Committee, consists of First Nation staff from the Culture and Events Department, and Major Projects Office, and elected Councillors responsible for [Pillar 5 - Cultural Awareness, Communication, and Outreach](#) within the MCFN governance model.
6. A dialogue with the Huron-Wendat Nation was led by Bob Goulais (Nbisiing Consulting) on May 3, 2022. The City team met with a representative of Le Bureau du Nionwentsio, who are responsible for the First Nation's activities, historical and anthropological research, and consultations in Wendake South, the Wendat traditional territory in central-southern Ontario.

B. Youth Artist Co-Design Session

In partnership with Julian Diego (SKETCH) and Zahra Ebrahim (Monumental Projects), Ariel Sim (Conscious Creator) led a co-design process with four (4) youth artists (ages 18 - 35) and one (1) elder artist in Toronto (Tkaronto). Through the process, each artist created an art piece and statement responding to this artistic prompt:

What histories, communities, and ways of being would you like to see commemorated in Toronto (Tkaronto)?

Before the in-person co-design session, each artist was invited to complete a pre-work Sounds & Sights Journal, collecting audio recordings, pictures, and videos from their community spaces. The in-person session was hosted at SKETCH, located in the lower level of Artscape Youngplace, just west of Trinity Bellwoods Park on April 29, 2022. A second virtual session was hosted two weeks after for the artists to share their final works and thoughts as they checked out of the process. The final art pieces and artist statements can be seen and read in full in **Appendix B. Youth Artist Co-Design Session Summary**.

[SKETCH](#), our co-lead organization for the youth artist co-design process, is a community arts enterprise engaging diverse young people, ages 16-29, from across Canada, who live homeless or are on the margins and navigate poverty to:

- experience the transformative power of the arts;
- build leadership and self-sufficiency in the arts; and
- cultivate social and environmental change through the arts.

C. Public Panel Discussion

A public panel discussion - titled *Our City, Our Stories: A public panel discussion on commemoration in the public realm* - was virtually held on Zoom on May 12, 2022 at 6:30pm.

Hosted by Zahra Ebrahim (Monumental Projects), opening remarks were offered by Ben Macintosh (City of Toronto). Each panelist was asked to speak a bit about their work around commemoration and explore what histories, communities, and ways of being they would like to see commemorated in Toronto (Tkaronto). This was followed by a dialogue exploring additional questions, including questions from the audience. The panelists were:

- Dr. Melanie J. Newton, Associate Professor of History at the University of Toronto
- Faizaan Khan, Public Space Fellow at The Bentway Conservancy
- Catherine Tàmmaro, Artist utrihōt ~ waʔdat aʒaʔtúʔtəʔ
- Bonnie Devine, Associate Professor Emerita at OCAD University and the Founding Chair of OCAD U's Indigenous Visual Culture Program

On the panel, some key themes discussed were:

- Recent and current works among the panelists and the City of Toronto in the areas of commemoration, recognition, and renaming in the public realm. Works spanned areas and sectors including education, research, policy, community engagement, storytelling, and art.
- Exploring the *Draft City of Toronto Principles for Commemoration in the Public Realm*, taking a deeper look into the background of the project, past findings, new plans for research and community engagement, and policy decisions.
- A discussion on why naming matters, how to hold multiple histories and truths, and how to confront difficult histories with grace and integrity.
- What histories, stories, and ways of being could be commemorated in Toronto? Appreciating the diversity and interconnectedness of our stories, how can commemorations in the City honour a diversity of stories and legacies, with an eye to supporting future generations?
- Explorations of how to elevate Indigenous protocols, storytelling, and art-making as key processes and ways of being in commemoration, highlighting untold stories from the original peoples of this land.

A total of 86 people registered. You can watch the recording of the panel discussion [here](#).³

“I would say that I’m not interested in erasing the existing colonial names here in Toronto, because I believe that they contain important memories and traces of the history of the city. And I believe that those traces have meaning, both positive and negative meaning for many citizens, including me, and should be preserved. However, I would like to see alongside those monuments of the British empire, meaningful mention and gestures toward the many thousands of Indigenous people who made their way here, who made a home here, and whose ancestors have lived here, on these lands, for tens of thousands of years.”

Bonnie Devine during the Our City, Our Stories panel discussion

³ [Appendix A. Recording of “Our City, Our Stories” Panel Discussion](#)

Limitations & Tensions

Working in the context of municipal governance with content of this nature creates some limitations to our ability to embody equity and meaningful community co-development approaches. Ahead of sharing our insights on the draft principles, we would like to acknowledge some of the limitations and tensions that were unearthed during this process and provide recommendations for how the City can pursue more inclusive approaches to public engagement for future projects:

Rapid timelines limit meaningful community engagement.

Monumental Projects' activities - including project planning and reporting - ran from mid-February 2022 until the end of May 2022. Due to the project's rapid timelines, we partnered with community organizations that could best connect us with grassroots leaders who are in deep and regular communication with their respective communities. It was through trusted community organizations and trusted entities that we were able to create opportunities for dialogue and initial input into the Recognition Review Project.

To note, partnering organizations and participants were offered honoraria for their time spent in the engagement process and their contributions to this report.

As a result of our model, we spoke with a relatively small sample size, and largely with community leaders. This is just a jumping off point. Several participants noted that a deeper, sustained community engagement model is needed to support meaningful outcomes for commemoration and equity-deserving communities in Toronto (Tkaronto). Both community leaders and **individual community members** should have additional opportunities to contribute their thoughts and advice into shaping the City of Toronto (Tkaronto)'s process to guide commemoration. Additional work needs to be carried out in perpetuity to create a meaningful co-development process that prioritizes equity-deserving groups.

Recommendations:

- Create and steward an ongoing process of community engagement and co-development, that includes engagement with both community leaders and individuals from equity-deserving groups in Toronto (e.g., Black, Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+ communities). This process should continue to be stewarded by trusted organizations and trusted entities, and should convene community members regularly throughout the year.
- In an effort to meet people where they are, understand that scheduling and coordination with community organizations and community members requires ample lead time, and adjust project timelines accordingly.

- Ensure that First Nations rights-holders are engaged in a co-development process for commemoration. The rights-holders in Toronto (Tkaronto) are:
 - Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN);
 - Huron-Wendat Nation; and
 - Six Nations of the Grand River.

Decolonize the consultation and engagement process.

The process of community engagement was developed by the City and not by community members from equity-deserving groups. The process reflects a colonial model of bureaucratic consultation and reporting that asks community members and vendors to operate within a limited set of activities and reporting styles. These activities and ways of being strengthen and reinforce the existing colonial model of governance. In order to truly decolonize commemoration in Toronto (Tkaronto), we also need to decolonize the process of consultation and reporting. The City of Toronto (Tkaronto) has an opportunity to shift internal processes of how work is proposed and contracted, and how consultative information is received and integrated into policy. In order to decolonize this process, the City will need to include new ways of being and working – including Indigenous ceremony, protocols and ways of being – in the process of consultation that break from traditional / colonial consultation models.

We recognize that this is a problem that impacts departments across the City of Toronto organization, and is part of a broader conversation about how to more meaningfully engage equity-deserving groups. We want to recognize that the City of Toronto is already beginning to do this work, through a collaboration with Monumental Projects and the Planning & Development department co-creating the [Making Space toolkit](#) to support planners to lead more equitable engagement, as well as the engagement review currently being conducted through the City Manager's office. In doing this, it could - in some cases - mean longer project timelines, but would allow for the City to achieve better results and build more community trust.

Often in engagement processes, participants will share broader feedback beyond the topic at hand, in many cases, suggestions for how to improve the approach to speaking with the community and the 'public'. Young people we engaged through the youth artist sessions had broader concerns about how decisions get made, like concerns about outcomes, and feeling disconnected from City Council (and wanting to feel more connected), as well as wanting to know if there are options to say "no" if they don't agree with what the city is doing. They shared:

Who is approving the principles to guide commemoration? Who gets to vote? Who makes up the process? Will future actions reflect the words in the principles? Instead of the government process, is it enough for communities to just say 'no'? How do we hold City Council accountable, and make those connections?

Dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH

In ensuring that no feedback gets lost, we wanted to include ideas that participants in our process had about how the City might decolonize and add an equity lens to the process moving forward, both around commemoration and more broadly. We've included these ideas below.

Recommendations:

- A specific City of Toronto (Tkaronto) Indigenous advisory board, in the form of a Commemoration Circle, must be created to advise on, and play a decision-making role with regard to namings and public commemoration. The Commemoration Circle will include individuals with important skill-sets including having individuals who are language keepers, traditional knowledge holders, and have good communication and community outreach skills. Elders and youth should have a voice in this Circle.⁴
- When an Indigenous name is used, names will⁵ be in local Indigenous languages and be advised by fluent language speakers. Natural spaces will be exclusively named using Indigenous names. Namings will be reflective of Indigenous traditional protocols and be done in ceremony.⁶ Avoid anglicizing Indigenous names, instead providing support for people to accurately pronounce words and recognize alternative alphabets.
- That the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) consider supporting opportunities for sharing and cultural exchange associated with Indigenous names and commemoration between Indigenous communities and the other diverse communities in Toronto (Tkaronto) as a means of building bridges and supporting reconciliation.⁷
- That naming contests, where multiple options are put forward for selection by either decision-makers or the public, are not consistent with Indigenous name-giving traditions and may cause friction between nations. These types of competitive processes, when involving Indigenous names or considerations, should be discouraged.⁸
- That direct engagement between the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) and First Nations rights-holders will continue to be an important part of commemoration in the public realm.⁹
- That the City, in collaboration with First Nations-rights holders, consider modelling a naming and commemoration process based on the concept of finding consensus amongst First Nations in the territory.¹⁰
- As a part of the naming process, when Indigenous names are being considered, the elders, knowledge holders and language carriers should be given the opportunity to

⁴ Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

⁵ Some participants recommended that the language in the principles should be strengthened by using the word "will" instead of "should". We would like to honour that recommendation by also choosing to speak with the word "will".

⁶ Recommendation from dialogue with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), April 19 2022.

⁷ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

⁸ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

⁹ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

¹⁰ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

visit and walk land under consideration, to offer ceremony, and to connect with the spirit of the place.¹¹

How are we commemorating, and what resources are we using?

We noticed across our community dialogues a tension when considering what is adequate when addressing legacy issues of commemoration and creating new community-based processes for future commemorations in Toronto (Tkaronto). Some thought the draft framework represented a relatively light version of what should be a much deeper process of continuous community engagement. At the same time, concerns were raised about how much money will go into processes of commemoration (especially renaming) and questioned if the resources could be better invested toward community housing and other foundational social services needed by equity-deserving groups. Some questioned if there is a more affordable community-based approach, coined by one participant as “micro-naming” that draws money away from heavier bureaucratic processes, to be re-invested more directly into community-based approaches to address commemoration.

Recommendations:

- Changing problematic street names is just one step towards building a more inclusive city, and must be accompanied by additional investment in foundational social services to support equity-deserving communities. Otherwise, it would be rightly critiqued as a performative gesture. One participant encouraged the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) to go deeper than just changing a name, sharing: the City needs to consider how to include all the facets of society, like education, health care, and whatever else, to make sure that the history is acknowledged.¹²
- We should commemorate not just individual people, but communities, moments in history, ideas, and nature. Commemoration should make people feel happy, and like they belong; commemoration should make places that feel like home.¹³
- It’s important to think about where the funding is coming from for commemoration. Folks we spoke to were unclear about whether or not funding for renaming is driven by private sector actors. They noted: ‘Is the funding coming from big banks and if so, is that antithetical to Indigenous sovereignty?’ It would be worthwhile to make clear that the funding for this work comes from the City’s operating budget.
- What might micro-renaming (i.e., decentralized funding given to community-based groups to run naming processes in localized spaces) look like? Might localized renaming be done on smaller budgets?¹⁴

Changing the name of a colonial building will not transform its appearance, we need to allow Indigenous designers to profit from the change and include African and Diaspora influences.

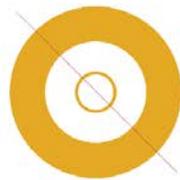
Dialogue with Black community leaders and organizations through NABC

¹¹ Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

¹² Recommendation from dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC), April 26 2022.

¹³ Recommendation from dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH, April 29 2022.

¹⁴ Recommendation from dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH, April 29 2022.



**What draft principles
stand out to you? Do
they resonate?**

Feedback on Draft Principles

In each of the community dialogues, the facilitator set the context by sharing the work that the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) has done to date (in some cases, a staff member from the City did this). Their brief remarks focused specifically on walking participants through the [Draft Principles for Commemoration in the Public Realm](#), how they were developed, and the process ahead to approve and operationalize them.

The facilitation team was aware that asking participants to reflect directly and solely on the principles could limit people's capacity to think laterally and creatively, anticipating that it would be difficult for people to do more than nuance the principles themselves, and share whether or not they were important. For this reason, the facilitation team broadened the dialogue to cover the themes cited [above](#), and noticed that through more human-centred, open conversation, clear feedback emerged on each of the principles themselves, while also making clear that there were some that needed to be combined and also added to the list.

There was some feedback that was consistent across all of the principles, that **to strengthen them, where the term "should" is used in the [draft framework](#), it should say "will"**.¹⁵ Additionally, it was noted in all of the dialogues with community leaders across equity-deserving groups, as well as in conversations with the Missisauguas of the First Credit and Huron-Wendat First Nation, that processes of commemoration should be co-created with Indigenous communities, honouring Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Also worth noting is that many participants recognized that the principles covered *how* renaming should happen (the process) and *what* stories we should be honouring. We'd recommend when the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) releases the final version of these principles to the public, to **order them from process to outcome**, adding a preamble up front that explains this context. We'd also recommend noting that some principles cover both process and outcome.

Below is the feedback pertaining to specific principles. In some cases, we have recommended that two principles be combined, and in those circumstances, the feedback is amalgamated. In the next section in this document, we'll outline principles that participants felt were missing in the draft.

The naming and commemoration process should leave me with a sense of pride in commemorating people who have done good things.
Dialogue through the Students Commission of Canada

¹⁵ Recommendation from dialogue with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), April 19 2022.

Principle: Indigenous Place-Keeping

DRAFT PRINCIPLE (Indigenous Place-Keeping): Commemorations should be grounded in the understanding and recognition that the City of Toronto is situated on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands. Commemoration is one tool to help to restore visibility to the Indigenous past, present and future of the land, creating a greater sense of place and belonging, and sparking dialogue about the legacy of colonialism, and a shared path forward. Recognition, naming and honouring is integral to Indigenous place-keeping and place-making, and help advance Indigenous self-determination, critical to the health and well-being of Indigenous People.

What we heard

With the depth and richness of the feedback shared below, it may be advisable to split “Indigenous Place-Keeping” into two principles: (a) Honouring Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being; and (b) Indigenous Place-Keeping. It could also be clearly marked that it applies across all principles to guide commemoration.

To work in the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation, it was underscored in the conversations that the City should commit to naming and commemoration being co-developed with Indigenous peoples. A specific City of Toronto (Tkaronto) Indigenous advisory board, in the form of a Commemoration Circle, must be created to advise on, and play a decision-making role with regard to namings and public commemoration. The Commemoration Circle will include individuals with important skill-sets including having individuals who are language keepers, traditional knowledge holders, and have good communication and community outreach skills. Elders and youth should have a voice in this Circle.¹⁶

In dialogue with First Nations rights-holders, as well as the broad spectrum of participants from equity-deserving groups, there was resolve that this principle in particular, should have a heavier weight,¹⁷ potentially something that applies across all principles. It was also noted that to bring this principle to life would mean applying it in both process (honouring Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and the plurality of ways that manifests across Indigenous communities), as well as the outcomes (the specific names and commemorations).

We also heard that commemoration and recognition impacts the day-to-day experience of living in the city. Participants shared how inappropriate and harmful it is for Indigenous

¹⁶ Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

¹⁷ Recommendation from dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community members with the 519, April 13 2022.

community members to see names like “Indian Road” in Toronto (Tkaronto) neighbourhoods,¹⁸ as it preserves and upholds the trauma of colonization. In response to this, some municipalities have taken to replacing names like these by replacing them with a word from (as an example) the Anishinaabemowin language, without deep engagement with Indigenous communities and First Nations rights-holders, but also without acknowledging that in these communities, commemoration and naming is given through ceremony.

Participants also shared:

- **Work directly with First Nations rights-holders.** Direct engagement between the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) and First Nations rights-holders will continue to be an important part of commemoration in the public realm.¹⁹ The City should consider co-creating a process that will see each nation in the territory, and the broader Indigenous communities in Toronto (Tkaronto), be given the opportunity to provide a name when naming opportunities come available.²⁰
- **Reflect traditional Indigenous protocols, and create space for ceremony.** As a part of the naming process, when Indigenous names, people, cultural, and historical narratives are being considered, that the elders, knowledge holders and language carriers be given the opportunity to visit and walk land under consideration, to offer ceremony and connect with the spirit of the place.²¹ Recognize that the ceremony of naming includes a community celebration and a feast.²² Depending on the type of commemoration, create space for different ways of holding ceremony. As an example, make it possible to hold sacred space to recognize those who have passed on, and to allow the community to send the spirit on their journey in a good way (these kinds of ceremonies are already happening, for the Trans Day of Remembrance, Trans Day of Visibility, PRIDE, and more)²³. Additionally, it was recommended that the City, in collaboration with First Nations rights-holders, consider modelling a naming and commemoration process based on the concept of finding consensus amongst First Nations in the territory.²⁴
- **Embrace Indigenous languages and support the public to learn proper pronunciation through education.** Names will be in local Indigenous languages, and be advised by fluent language speakers. Do the work of educating the public on the meaning and pronunciation, as seeing and hearing these names in the urban landscape have the potential to be meaningful, if implemented respectfully. All namings done in Indigenous languages, and commemorations involving Indigenous

¹⁸ Recommendation from dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community members with the 519, April 13 2022.

¹⁹ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

Recommendation from dialogue with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), April 19 2022.

²⁰ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

²¹ Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

²² Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

²³ Recommendation from dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community members with the 519, April 13 2022.

²⁴ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

people, cultural and historical narratives, should include a community celebration and feast.²⁵ Natural spaces should be exclusively named using Indigenous names.²⁶

- **Make the Guiding Principles inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing and being.** The Guiding Principles will be inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. This includes the integration of Indigenous values (ex. the Seven Grandfather Teachings) and other values important to Indigenous peoples including being respectful, meaningful, having integrity and including accountability back to Indigenous communities.²⁷
- **Acknowledge the truth, even when it's hard to hear.** Naming and commemoration will consider influential elders and leaders, the memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, the memory of residential school victims and survivors, the memory of homeless relatives, and speak the truth of Indigenous history, including those stories that may be difficult to hear.²⁸ We should also commemorate who was here before settlement, honouring histories of Indigenous people. This would help to inform the public too; currently, residents have to find and learn those histories on their own.²⁹
- **Honour the gift of knowledge.** The City should ensure that, when Indigenous knowledge is shared by elders, knowledge holders and language keepers, their contributions be recognized by providing adequate honoraria to those participants. Honoraria should not be considered compensation, but in the spirit of gift-giving in acknowledging the sharing of Indigenous traditional knowledge.³⁰

²⁵ Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

²⁶ Recommendation from dialogue with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), April 19 2022.

²⁷ Recommendation from dialogue with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), April 19 2022.

²⁸ Recommendation from dialogue with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), April 19 2022.

²⁹ Recommendation from dialogue with youth artists through Sketch, April 29 2022.

³⁰ Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

Principles: Co-Creation + Demonstrated Community Support and Engagement

DRAFT PRINCIPLE (Co-Creation): Commemorations of significance to Indigenous, Black or equity-deserving communities should be guided by a principle of co-creation with members of these communities. A commitment to meaningful co-creation helps to share authority with communities through active engagement of community members in decision-making throughout the planning of the commemoration. Proposed commemorations must have demonstrated community support, taking into account a broad range of voices, perspectives and experiences of local residents.

DRAFT PRINCIPLE (Demonstrated Community Support and Engagement): Proposed commemorations must have demonstrated community support, taking into account a broad range of voices, perspectives and experiences of local residents. When determining community support, it is important to consider the unequal impacts a commemoration may have on different groups. The voices of those groups that are or have historically been most impacted by the commemorated subject should be centred in community engagement processes, alongside the opinions of local residents and businesses. There should also be careful consideration of these voices when there is demonstrated support and some or significant opposition to a commemoration. It is also important to recognize that no one community speaks with a single voice, and to consider the multiple opinions and lived experiences within communities when designing community engagement processes.

The type and extent of community engagement will vary depending on the type of commemoration. Examples could include letters of support, surveys, or community meetings.

What we heard

Demonstrating community support and community engagement – I'm hesitant about this, especially for Indigenous communities, governments sometimes don't do this in a meaningful way.

Dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community through the 519

The feedback across these two principles had extensive overlap, and for that reason, we've combined the feedback as it applies to both. Moving forward, we would recommend that the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) combine the two, creating one that encompasses the broad spectrum from engagement to co-creation.

It should be noted that participants shared that “demonstrated” community support made them uneasy. Often, the extent of community feedback can be a single consultation meeting or town hall, where the number of people registered or attending can be

considered synonymous with meaningful engagement and support. When reframing this principle, consider qualifying “demonstrated community support” by discussing meaningful engagement, co-development of policy and programs, and inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing and being as part of the way of validating community support.

Participants also shared:

- **Move at the speed of trust (even though it may result in the process taking longer).** The City of Toronto (Tkaronto) is setting the right intentions in wanting to work more closely with First Nations rights-holders and equity-deserving communities. They encouraged the City to also be aware that some communities may be hesitant to speak with a public official and may be more open to share their opinion in a less official setting, and to be careful not to make assumptions about how people relate to institutions. This means it may take longer to develop relationships, build trust, and co-develop an approach for working together. Moving at the speed of trust also considers effective and meaningful engagement of First Nations rights-holders and Indigenous communities. Names should be taken back to the communities for input and feedback to ensure those names are supported by the many diverse Indigenous communities in Toronto (Tkaronto).³¹
- **Plurality of methods, protocols, and processes.** Integrate a variety of community styles and methods to ensure folks can engage in a way that feels comfortable for them (e.g., in person meetings, online surveys, walking tours, art sessions, community feasts). Create space and time for each commemoration process to work with the various ceremonies, discussion styles, and processes adhered to by the diverse communities of Toronto (Tkaronto). There should be community engagement around each commemoration proposal.³² Consider a bottom-up approach to commemoration that is both cost effective in how public dollars are spent and puts the process back in communities' hands.
- **Work with the elders.** Often these processes of engagement and co-creation focus on engagement and collaboration with rights-holders, and Indigenous agencies and organizations, which don't always include elders. Participants shared that elders from the Indigenous community, like an elders council should be welcomed and present at the table. They also noted that there are elders across other equity-deserving groups – in Black, racialized, newcomer and 2SLGBTQ+ communities -- who should also be present in the conversations.
- **The process should feel inclusive, and like the community is making a difference.** People shared that it's not just about what the process is, but how it feels to engage with it. Recognizing that not all community members need to be part of every process, this starts with a local, community-based understanding of what the goals

³¹ Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

³² Recommendation from dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC), April 26 2022.

are and who should be participating. People shared that the process should feel personal, like the community dialogues, like a dialogue, and a real conversation.

- **Empower a diversity of community voices.** There needs to be more representation across the many dynamic equity-deserving groups. There also needs to be local voices; as an example, when thinking about naming a building, consider engaging the people who use those spaces daily (not just the owner of the building). Consider how engagement in the process could empower and support marginalized communities even if the commemoration isn't in or for a marginalized community.

Principles: Historical and Community Research + Relevance to Toronto

DRAFT PRINCIPLE (Historical and Community Research): A decision to commemorate a person, event, place or idea should be grounded in sound historical and/or community research that is carefully and ethically undertaken. Research should consider a range of primary and secondary sources, alongside traditional knowledge, oral histories, and community stories where such sources are applicable and available. Efforts should be undertaken to meaningfully communicate the social, cultural and/or historical context of a commemoration to a broad public audience.

DRAFT PRINCIPLE (Relevance to Toronto): Proposals for commemoration should have a historical or cultural connection to Toronto, with priority given to subjects with a clear connection to the local area in which the commemoration will be displayed. Subjects with a national or international significance may also be chosen for commemoration where there is a demonstrated connection for communities living in the local area.

What we heard

The draft guiding principle respecting “Relevance to Toronto” does not reflect the reality that Indigenous history pre-dates the establishment of Toronto. Many cultures may want to reflect people, events or stories that may not be related to Toronto. This guiding principle should be reflected as an important consideration but not an exclusionary requirement.

Dialogue with the Huron-Wendat Nation

Across both of these principles, we heard a general hesitation around the idea of what is considered “sound” research as well as the limitations of thinking about commemoration in the colonial context of borders and imposed boundaries. We recommend reframing this principle to acknowledge that the oral histories and community stories (as an example) may reference land beyond what is known as Toronto (Tkaronto). When commemorating these traditional lands and histories, the community is also connecting to the spiritual and cultural context of that story.

Participants also shared:

- **Honour nuance and complexity within equity-deserving groups.** Participants noted that just because a person is Black or Indigenous (as an example) doesn't mean that they support all Black or Indigenous commemorations. Research on the people to be named after is important, but be conscious and thoughtful about who is conducting that research, and how they are doing so.³³

³³ Recommendation from dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC), April 26 2022.

- **Histories depend on who's telling them.** Participants shared that stories shared about their community tend to focus on the "deficit".³⁴ As an example, they wanted to highlight stories beyond slavery, as "slavery and colonization are just small parts of our history. White people made our history start there."
- **Include oral & pre-colonial histories.** The draft guiding principle respecting *Relevance to Toronto (Tkaronto)* does not reflect the reality that Indigenous history pre-dates the establishment of Toronto (Tkaronto). Many cultures may want to reflect people, events or stories that may not be related to Toronto (Tkaronto). This guiding principle should be reflected as an important consideration but not an exclusionary requirement.³⁵

We're trying to make up for lost times, by including the names of people who were left out of the history books.

Dialogue with Black community leaders and organizations through NABC

³⁴ Recommendation from dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC), April 26 2022.

³⁵ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

Principle: Diversity Our Strength

DRAFT PRINCIPLE (Diversity our Strength): The urban landscape should reflect the diversity of Toronto residents and a more authentic account of Toronto history. To create public spaces that are more inclusive and representative of Toronto's diversity, new commemorations, including the naming and renaming of civic assets when a commemorative name is being considered, should prioritize telling the stories of groups that are currently underrepresented in civic spaces, including Indigenous Peoples as the traditional and historic stewards of this land, Black communities, racialized communities, women, 2SLGBTQ+ persons, and other equity-deserving groups. The selection of a priority group for commemoration should be based on the connection of the proposed commemoration to the local area, as determined through a combination of community engagement and research.

What we heard

“The messiest parts of who we are are a part of who we are.”
micha the happie in the Youth Artist Co-Design session with SKETCH

Across many of the community dialogues, participants shared that they, and many people within their communities, feel a strong connection to specific spaces and places. They would like to see those connections recognized in nuanced ways. There is a deep agreement with the intention behind “*Diversity, Our Strength*” - facilitating meaningful plurality where people from diverse backgrounds are all able to live authentically in peace and safety. One panelist, Bonnie Devine, noted that - Toronto (Tkaronto) being one of the most diverse cities in the world - it could be one of Toronto (Tkaronto)’s great gifts to the world if we can co-develop exemplary commemorative practices with our communities that honour the City’s diversity in both content and process. Participants and partners share an awareness at how complex it is to truly embody and facilitate plurality within the world of policy. They challenged the City to pay special attention to this principle, and recognize that communities are not monocultures.

One participant shared the story of Dundas Street; a street where they lived and raised their children. They come from a mixed background of both European and Garifuna ancestry. They recited the history of Dundas and recognized Henry Dundas’ role in prolonging slavery in Canada. They noted that Dundas was designed as a military street, and played a key role in the colonial effort to remove people from their lands. They shared stories of Alexandra Park, complex social moments like homeless encampment clear outs, celebrations of Chinese New Year and martial arts communities holding space for community members, new TTC streetcars adorned with Black artists’ work, stating “*The TTC supports Black Artists.*” They reflected on how street names are powerful identifiers in our lives; their child being born on Dundas Street carries the identifier with them in their

government documents. They reflected on the deep layering of stories we can find in just four blocks of one street and wondered how we embrace and continue to reshape.

Another participant noted the importance of Black-only spaces and the role they play for specific subsets of their community.³⁶ Participants who identified as 2SLGBTQ+, talked about the feeling of spaces that acknowledge specific intersectionalities - queer, racialized, disabled - and what they do to elevate the experience and sense of belonging of living in the city. Newcomers to Canada also often seek communities they identify with upon arrival to build relationships.³⁷

There is also diversity among the First Nations, and the many Indigenous communities of Toronto (Tkaronto), their histories and connection to the land. We heard recommendations abounding that namings and commemorations will have a respectful balance of the diversity of Indigenous communities. Names and commemorations will be inclusive of the First Nations rights-holders, treaty signatories, and local Indigenous languages. Namings and commemoration will also be inclusive of the many diverse voices of Indigenous communities in Toronto (Tkaronto).³⁸

Participants also shared:

- **Place-based, bespoke names matter.** Participants commented on how cities in Canada have a common set of colonial street names like Church Street, Queen Street, and King Street. These names in the public realm work against the principles of diversity and celebrating untold stories and should be considered for renaming.³⁹

“If we’re going to acknowledge the kinds of violence that have happened here as part of the architecture, institutional but also physical of the place that we live in, then it is important to recognize that there is no statute of limitations on genocide. We have to really be serious about thinking through what it means, and what it has cost us as a community of people to not acknowledge and to not attempt to repair that history. It costs us in lives. It costs us in dreams. It costs us in possibilities.”

Dr. Melanie Newton during the Our City, Our Stories panel discussion

³⁶ Recommendation from dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH, April 29 2022.

³⁷ Recommendation from dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH, April 29 2022.

³⁸ Recommendation from dialogue with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), April 19 2022.

³⁹ Recommendation from dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community members with the 519, April 13 2022.

Principle: Celebrating Untold Stories

DRAFT PRINCIPLE (Celebrating Untold Stories): To encourage the sharing of diverse stories, new commemorations should not duplicate subjects that are already commemorated elsewhere in Toronto. This on private properties. An exception to this is the geographic clustering of assets that share the same name, such as a park sharing the same commemorative name as a neighbouring street. Exceptions may also be considered for commemorations honouring the priority groups outlined above.

What we heard

We should commemorate not just individual people, but communities, moments in history, ideas, and nature.

Dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH

It was clear across all of the conversations that we need to expand the aperture of what commemoration is. There was a thread through all of the discussions that rejected the individualistic “hero’s journey” approach to commemoration: focusing on a single person’s accomplishments, without recognizing the communities, energies, creatures, environments, and values that enabled that person’s success.

In many ways, the focus on individuals’ histories reinforces colonial and capitalist mindsets; we should shift our lens to publicly honour collectives, values, and nature itself. In addition to telling untold stories, the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) has an opportunity to highlight important **ideas, principles, and values**. For example, instead of naming a square after an individual, it could be named the *Truth and Reconciliation* square. Naming things after important values orients commemoration toward the future, reinforcing key principles and ideas that support the next generations in the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) to continue to reshape the city and reconcile with difficult histories. A **collective** of people can also be commemorated, rather than an individual within that collective. Finally, it came up time and time again that we should honour people’s connection to nature, beginning and ending with the land, commemorating and honouring Toronto (Tkaronto)’s **natural history**.⁴⁰ What would it look like to commemorate Toronto (Tkaronto)’s natural landscape, the plants and animals originating here?

Participants also shared:

- **Include stories that are hard to hear.** Consistent with what we heard across many of the principles, ensure that the City is not excluding stories because they might be difficult for the public to hear. As an example, participants urged the City to begin

⁴⁰ Recommendation from dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH, April 29 2022.

recognizing the many Indigenous burial sites throughout the City of Toronto (Tkaronto).⁴¹

- **Commemoration doesn't always have to be about humans.** Commemoration can be about values, principles, and ideas. As an example, one participant shared how they would like to honour the resistance and resilience of their community.⁴² They also shared that commemorating values and ideas can inspire people to come together, and gather across generations and differences.
- **Honour the collective, honour invisible work.** In the spirit of departing from exclusively recognizing the story of a single leader, we should also think about the people that helped them to be, and ultimately supported them into this leadership role. This is often invisible work that goes unrecognised.⁴³
- **Commemorate the good parts, even if they are small moments.** Participants noted that this is especially in neighbourhoods that have bad stereotypes. These seemingly “small” moments - an initiative of a youth or community group from diverse backgrounds, as an example - are important and should be considered for commemoration because they are making a difference and having an impact for their community and the city.
- **Listen for low, quiet voices.** Finding the most meaningful stories of change, impact, and meaning can often come from quieter, more discrete voices. The City can find inspiring stories among quieter voices by engaging in long-term and meaningful community dialogues through trusted entities and community-based organizations.

There's that feeling that even when we walk through those streets it doesn't represent us. I don't know what Dufferin means, it autocorrects to suffering. The low, quiet voices must be captured.

Dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community leaders and organizations through the 519

I would like to see people from Africa included in street names, and we should include people who are still alive, as well as those who helped people in the past.

Dialogue with Black community leaders and organisation through NABC

⁴¹ Recommendation from dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community members with the 519, April 28 2022.

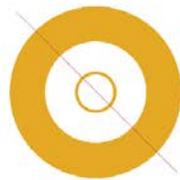
⁴² Recommendation from dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC), April 26 2022.

⁴³ Recommendation from dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC), April 26 2022.

Principle: Compliance with legislation, City By-laws and policies

DRAFT PRINCIPLE (Compliance with legislation, City By-laws and policies): No commemoration shall be considered that is contrary to Canadian laws, City By-laws, or City policies, including the Human Rights and Anti-Harassment / Discrimination Policy.

No feedback. This principle was not addressed in community dialogues, likely appearing too self-evident to warrant commentary.



What should the process of commemoration look like?

Recommendations for New Principles

There were some distinct themes that emerged from the community dialogues, that we offer below as the foundation for new Principles on Commemoration in the Public Realm for the City of Toronto (Tkaronto).

New Principle A: Make It Educational

That colonial names and commemoration, especially those commemorating John A. MacDonald, must be reconsidered or re-contextualized to reflect the truth from the perspective of Indigenous peoples.

Dialogue with the Huron-Wendat Nation

But also acknowledge in some way why those past names are problematic so we can learn from it.

Dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through NABC

What we heard

In reviewing participant feedback, this theme was one of the most consistent pieces of counsel: whether something is being renamed, or named for the first time, tell the story of *why*, with particular recognition of communities that advocated to inspire that change. It was strongly encouraged that the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) align all commemoration activities with an educational component for the public. Correspondingly, people considered this to be a critical step in creating a more informed and civically engaged Toronto (Tkaronto). Education can include plaques, digital resources and interactive experiences.

Across all of the conversations and the panel discussion, there was a strong desire to ensure that we tell the full story of how a street came to be named or renamed, and not doing so would be a disservice to future generations.

Participants shared:

- **There needs to be an education component to naming and commemoration.** This can be done in a variety of ways, including:
 - Promoting street names with **walking tours** to show the path or history of the place.

- Providing **virtual reality** walking tours, which may invite younger generations and citizens who live in more remote neighbourhoods into the conversation.
- Place **QR codes** in public spaces that link to digital resources describing the commemoration.
- Include **plaques** with key information where a commemoration has been made.
- **Integrate this education where people are already learning.** The history behind the names of streets should be taught in schools, with a specific intention to include members of equity-deserving groups in that process. In addition to educating in schools about new commemorations, ensure we speak into legacy issues, addressing difficult and tenuous histories with truth and integrity.
- **Educate about difficult histories.** Avoid the misconception that renaming amounts to erasing history by consistently providing public education about the people, events, and long-term impacts related to a commemorative name. As street names and other public assets are renamed, provide educational resources and interactive experiences that speak into the difficult and uncomfortable histories. Speak openly about past and present harm in Canadian communities.
- **Take the opportunity of commemoration to engage in reconciliation.** In honouring the histories, knowledge and ways of being of Indigenous communities, commemoration serves as a critical tool for public education. Participants noted that currently they have to find and learn about Indigenous histories on their own.⁴⁴ That the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) consider supporting opportunities for sharing and cultural exchange associated with Indigenous names and commemoration between Indigenous communities and the other diverse communities in Toronto (Tkaronto) as a means of building bridges and supporting reconciliation.⁴⁵
- **Educate as a way of respecting communities.** In considering names in Indigenous languages, the City should encourage their mainstream use by helping residents and visitors to pronounce them and understand their meanings.⁴⁶

New Principle B: Recognize that communities already commemorate.

Considering the complexity of what was, what is, and what could be, the process of commemoration feels similar to the process of collaging: how do we make new with things that already exist?

Dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH

⁴⁴ Recommendation from dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH, April 29 2022.

⁴⁵ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

⁴⁶ Recommendation from dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH, April 29 2022.

Recommendation from dialogue with Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) Culture and Design Advisory Committee, April 27 2022.

Communities implored the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) to recognize that they are already commemorating. In Indigenous communities, there is a long history of name-giving traditions. Many places across the City already have names but have been renamed as a result of colonialism. The Toronto Islands, for example, were called Mnisiing (“at the islands”). The land known today as Toronto (Tkaronto) was called Ishpaadina (“the high place”) or Adobiigook (“place of the Alder trees”). It is important that Torontonians begin to learn about these original names in the Anishinaabemowin language.

It was also shared that certain naming processes, including naming contests or competitive processes (especially involving Indigenous names or considerations) may cause friction between nations and should actively be discouraged.⁴⁷ In Indigenous communities, and many other communities that engaged with us, there are existing processes in place to honour people, values, ideas, moments, collectives, nature, and more. These communities already formally and informally commemorate spaces and places when the municipal recognition doesn’t uplift their communities. These community-led commemorations reflect their identities and are done in a way that is authentic to communities’ cultures and communication styles.

Existing community processes for commemoration is an asset to the City’s commemoration work. We encourage the City to take an Assets-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach: *“Asset Based Community Development builds on the assets that are found in the community and mobilizes individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to realise and develop their strengths.”*⁴⁸ Through our community dialogues, a wealth of existing commemorative processes were unearthed, along with the people and groups to steward them. For example, in the trans community there are sacred fires to honour those who have passed,⁴⁹ there are diverse Indigenous protocols for commemoration, naming ceremonies, and community feasts. We heard that communities regularly - and informally - rename places within their neighbourhoods. What might it look like for the City to recognize and embrace these community-led efforts?

Participants shared:

- **Take a grassroots approach.** Consider a process that empowers trusted entities and community-based organizations to lead localized commemoration efforts. This approach may be more cost-effective for the City, time sensitive, and culturally authentic.⁵⁰ The City could give funding directly to grassroots organizations to co-create commemorative naming in localized places with their community members. This could be more meaningful and healing, giving residents an opportunity to engage in a more fluid and intimate process with their city space.

⁴⁷ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

⁴⁸ Asset Based Community Development. <https://www.nurtureddevelopment.org/asset-based-community-development/>

⁴⁹ Recommendation from dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community members with the 519, April 13 2022.

⁵⁰ Recommendation from dialogue with youth artists through SKETCH, April 29 2022.

- **Embrace plurality.** We need many ways [for] people to come together, discussion is one way, but a lot of people communicate in other ways.⁵¹
- **Advance a fair and just City.** The process should empower and support marginalized communities even if the commemoration isn't in or for a marginalized community.⁵²

New Principle C: Don't wait to commemorate

***I do not want to look back on the past, I want names to be future-oriented.**
Dialogue with Black community leaders and organizations through NABC*

A consistent insight emerged that we often wait until someone has passed until we commemorate them. Shifting our lens from looking to the past to being future-oriented, we can honour those who are alive and making an impact now, including youth who, through recognition, could be inspired to continue to make an impact in the future.

Participants shared that expanding the idea of what we commemorate and recognizing that commemoration can be a living and evolving process, could provide the opportunity to inspire us to collectively think about who we want to be.

Participants shared:

- **Recognize children as a way of honouring the future.** Naming and commemoration should always consider children and youth as people who can be commemorated.⁵³ Consider how these types of commemorations could uplift and positively impact future generations.
- **Let's honour people who are still alive.** Commemoration should not solely talk about the past, but also about the future. This includes commemorating people who are still alive and doing amazing things.⁵⁴
- **Work through communities.** (see above: Recognize that communities are already commemorating).

“A child, when they see themselves reflected admirably in the lived environment around them, feels good. And feeling good, it makes good. You are giving kids the space to be themselves and to grow appropriately according to their gifts and their inclinations, and not to try to shovel themselves into a shoebox. And I think that this is such an important investment that a city can make is in its youth, and in the spaces that those youth can occupy.”

Bonnie Devine during the Our City, Our Stories panel discussion

⁵¹ Recommendation from dialogue with 2SLGBTQ+ community members with the 519, April 13 2022.

⁵² Recommendation from dialogue with Diverse Youth through Students Commission Canada (SCC), April 28 2022.

⁵³ Recommendation from dialogue with Diverse Youth through Students Commission Canada (SCC), April 28 2022.

⁵⁴ Recommendation from dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC), April 26 2022.

Checklist for Commemoration

In working through the City, and with trusted entities and grassroots organizations to commemorate on a local scale, the City could provide a **checklist** to guide commemorations. The following questions were proposed in a community dialogue, and are a great jumping off point for a checklist to guide this work:

- Does the commemoration create space for my identity and the narratives I most closely relate to?
- Does the commemoration foster a sense of ownership?
- Did the commemoration and naming process utilize a community-engaged approach from start to celebrations?
- Did the commemoration and naming process balance past-present-future-oriented considerations for naming and recognition?
- Has the commemoration process considered choosing a name that honours a core value or idea, rather than a person or group of people?⁵⁵

Addressing Legacy Issues in Commemorations

The following is an excerpt from the Draft City of Toronto Principles for Commemoration in the Public Realm:

As community values evolve over time, there are occasions when older forms of commemoration no longer fit with the ethical standards of today. A change to a commemoration may be warranted when a review identifies significant new developments in research or scholarship on the commemorated subject; where the review identifies an absence of an integral part of the history of a subject in its commemoration; or where there is significant community support for making a change.

When a change to the commemoration is warranted, actions on legacy issues could take a three-Rs approach: rename (e.g., a street), remove (e.g., a monument), or reinterpret (e.g., a street name, monument, or artwork). Renaming, removing or reinterpreting a commemoration should not be seen as erasing history. Commemoration must be distinguished from history, as history is an evidence-based process of understanding the past. When a civic commemoration is removed, this represents a change in what we choose to collectively honour and remember in public spaces. Its subject will continue to be treated as historically significant, where historical evidence shows it to be of consequence.

Recognizing the importance of the historical record, older commemorations that have been removed from public display and the processes used to review them should be preserved and documented in the City's archival and historical collections for use in future

⁵⁵ This checklist is created from recommendations offered during the dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC), April 26 2022.

scholarship and education on Toronto (Tkaronto)'s history. Materials, artifacts or art works may also be transferred to other collections-based institutions in accordance with the Policies for City of Toronto Museum Collections.

What we heard

- Naming and commemoration will consider influential elders and leaders, the memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, those women who have worked to address MMIWG and gender-based discrimination under the Indian Act, the memory of residential school victims and survivors, the memory of homeless relatives, and speak the truth of Indigenous history, including those stories that may be difficult to hear.⁵⁶
- That colonial names and commemoration, especially those commemorating John A. MacDonald, must be reconsidered or re-contextualized to reflect the truth from the perspective of Indigenous peoples.⁵⁷
- Why not start with new streets and not necessarily rename all streets?⁵⁸
- It's important to think about where the funding is coming from for commemoration. Folks we spoke to were unclear about whether or not funding for renaming is driven by private sector actors. They noted: 'Is the funding coming from big banks and if so, is that antithetical to Indigenous sovereignty?' It would be worthwhile to make clear that the funding for this work comes from the City's operating budget.
- Please see the above section (see: [New Principles](#)), describing community-based and grassroots approaches to commemoration.

“You and your journey and your life is history in the making. I think it's important to understand that we make the city what it is, whether it chooses to acknowledge us or not.”

Faizaan Khan during the Our City, Our Stories panel discussion

Conclusion

Community engagement and co-development of an ever-more inclusive framework for commemoration in the public realm are vital for truth and reconciliation. This work is important, and there's more work to be done in the months and years ahead. We are grateful to all participants who contributed their wisdom to this report and look forward to how the City will evolve emerging commemoration processes to embrace this knowledge.

⁵⁶ Recommendation from dialogue with Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), April 19 2022.

⁵⁷ Recommendation from dialogue with Huron-Wendat Nation, May 3 2022.

⁵⁸ Recommendation from dialogue with Black community leaders & organizations through the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC), April 26 2022.

Appendix A. Recording of “Our City, Our Stories” Panel Discussion

[Click here to watch the recording](#)

The graphic is split into two vertical panels. The left panel has a dark purple background and features a yellow circular logo with a smaller circle inside and a diagonal line. Below the logo, the text reads "Our City, Our Stories" in yellow, followed by "A panel discussion about commemoration in the public realm" in white. At the bottom left is the "monumental" logo in yellow. The right panel has a yellow background and is titled "Panelists:" in black. It displays four circular headshots of the panelists: Bonnie Devine (top left), Dr. Melanie J. Newton (top right), Elder Catherine Tammara (bottom left), and Faizaan Khan (bottom right). At the bottom right of the right panel is the "TORONTO" logo in black.

[Click here to watch the recording](#)

Appendix B. Youth Artist Co-Design Session Summary

Youth Artists Co-Design Session

Date: April 29, 2022

Time: 1:30-4:00pm

Location: SKETCH, Lower Level, 180 Shaw Street, Unit 201, Toronto, ON, M6J 2W5

Artists: Ashley Meza-Wong, dairysam, micha the happie, Saysah

Lead Facilitator: Ariel Sim (Conscious Creator)

Support Team: Zahra Ebrahim (Monumental Projects), Julian Diego (SKETCH), Angelica de Jesus-Bretschneider (City of Toronto)

Co-Lead Organization: SKETCH

Overview

On Friday April 19, 2022, Monumental Projects, SKETCH, and the City of Toronto (Tkaronto) hosted a 2-hour Youth⁵⁹ Artist Co-Design Session exploring commemoration in Toronto (Tkaronto). Before the session, the young artists were introduced 1-on-1 to the Recognition Review project and the current process of exploring and seeking feedback on the Draft Principles to Guide Commemoration.

Artistic Prompt:

What histories, communities, and ways of being would you like to see commemorated in Toronto (Tkaronto)?

The artists each consented to participate in an arts-based co-design process exploring commemoration in Toronto (Tkaronto). To begin, the artists were invited to reflect on the “sights and sounds” of their communities through audio, photo and video journals. This was done ahead of the co-design session. The journal was a warm-up, and the artists could opt into their pre-work recordings being included in a group soundscape.

On the day of the session, the artists and facilitation team gathered at SKETCH, located on the lower level of Artscape Yongeplace just next to Trinity Bellwoods Park. Everyone gathered in a circle to begin the session with personal introductions and a conversation about the Recognition Review project, the City’s current activities, and plans for the future.

Key Takeaways from Context-Setting Dialogue

Process

- Considering the complexity of what was, what is, and what could be, the process of commemoration feels similar to the process of collaging: how do we make new with things that already exist?
- It’s important to think about where the funding is coming from for commemoration. Is the funding coming from big banks and if so, is that antithetical to Indigenous sovereignty? What would micro-renaming look like, done on smaller budgets?

⁵⁹ Ages 18 - 35

- Is this the right way to spend public dollars, or would it be better used in housing and social services? Naming a street or a community centre would only be the beginning. More must be done for communities.
- There were concerns about outcomes, and feeling disconnected from the City Council. Who is approving the principles to guide commemoration? Who gets to vote? Who makes up the process? Will future actions reflect the words in the principles? Instead of the government process, is it enough for communities to just say 'no'? How do we hold City Council accountable, and make those connections?
- Moving at the pace of trust is important even though it may take longer.
- Placemaking is important, and we also should acknowledge the changes in communities.
- How can we ensure people feel safe?

What We Commemorate

- We should commemorate not just individual people, but communities, moments in history, ideas, and nature. Commemoration should make people feel happy, and like they belong; commemoration should make places that feel like home.
- Names in neighbourhoods often do not reflect who is living in the area. How can we commemorate new communities who are here? Who do we allow to choose commemorations?
- We should also commemorate who was here before us, honouring histories of Indigenous people. This would help to inform the public too; currently, we have to find and learn those histories on our own.
- We should honour people's connection to nature, begin and end with the land.
- It's important to acknowledge the diversity within Black spaces, and honour Black-owned and led spaces.

Art-Making

After the dialogue, we invited the artists to share their pre-work and talk about what came up for them about commemoration, histories, and the names of things as they made their journals. We re-introduced the artistic prompt, re-grounding the room toward the creation of art pieces, artist statements, and any other reflections they would like to share with the City about the commemorative framework / process.

We offered two prompts the artists could use to create their art piece, using any medium of their choice.

- **Prompt 1: New Monuments:** Tell us a story about your community & history, as it relates to the physical space and cultural history of Toronto (Tkaronto): What's the history? What's the storyline? What part of the story would you visualize?
- **Prompt 2: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow:** Free write to each of these prompts for 5-10 minutes:
 - Yesterday: What did it look like? Feel like? What were you doing? Thinking? What was being commemorated? Who and what was seen?
 - Today: What does it look like? Feel like? What are you doing? Thinking? What is being commemorated? Who and what is seen?
 - Tomorrow: What will it look like? Feel like? What will you be doing? Thinking? What is being commemorated? Who and what will be seen?

- Circle back and create a final ‘poem’ / statement.⁶⁰

In a brief focus period at the end of the session, artists spent time heads-down with materials. Each artist began to create their respective pieces; dairysam began a comic, Saysah began a paper maché sculpture of a mushroom, and Ashley began to edit a video montage (Micha the happie had not yet joined the process). Micha joined the process a few days later, in a one-on-one session that moved through that same process. The artist bios, art pieces, and artist statements are included below.

Youth Artist Bios



dairysam is a brown, disabled and queer artist who loves working with all mediums, such as illustration, print, ceramics, poetry, textile arts, and much more! They play with colours, character and stories.



Saysah is a multidisciplinary artist, mover, and maker rooted in decolonial approaches to bridging gaps and finding intersections between Black liberation, belonging, and community. They live and create on the stolen land of Turtle Island on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinabewaki ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ, Wendake-Nionwentsïo, and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, which has been the meeting place and land of Indigenous, Inuit, and Métis peoples from across Turtle Island since time immemorial. Yas stands in solidarity with land defenders, water protectors and Black freedom fighters. Their work is often grounded in multisensorial mediums as a way to tell stories that centre 2SQTBIPOC experiences of resistance through the intersections of movement, sonic production and collaging.

⁶⁰ This free-writing approach was learned during the Inner Vision 2022 session *Poetry + Music* with Germain Hart on Friday, February 4, 2022 at 6 - 8 pm EST. Inner Vision Program Lead: Karyin Qiu.



Ashley Meza-Wong is an Ecuadorian Canadian artist and designer based in Toronto/Tkaronto. Her work encompasses a mixture of images, sounds, and writing surrounding community, culture, and care. Driven by curiosity, her pieces explore the complexities of identities and belonging within spiritual and ecological perspectives. Their projects have been exhibited at DesignTO Festival, Humber Galleries, and Inside Out Film Festival. She is currently foraging pathways toward equitable urban systems through personal learnings and her

graduate studies in user experience design.



micha the happie is a Storyteller, Singer, Writer, Performer, Visionary who lives to uplift and empower people, from all walks of life especially those who are excluded from society, by spreading love and joy through art. Born and bred in the countryside of Jamaica, now residing in Toronto for the past eleven (11) years. Micha is the founder of 'happie' a company committed to nurturing well being & Self worth, through diverse voices storytelling, exploring spirituality and sexuality beyond gender, race and societal constructs. Creating inclusive spaces that set the stage for the conversations on how we can live &

thrive together as one human family. The core intention of Micha's life work is to be a contribution to a brighter world where we get to embrace our uniqueness without shame.

Elder Artist Bio



Julian Diego is the Creative Director and Creative Lead in Public Art (My Public Living Room) at SKETCH.

Julian Diego works towards understanding equity, diversity and inclusion, with a focus on marginalized communities and the arts. His personal art practices of martial arts performance and instruction, and printmaking, have informed and are utilised in working with communities, individuals or as a means of personal expression. . He believes that everyone has creative aspects that can be encouraged and developed, and that as they do, communities develop and deepen their understanding of members and themselves. He is fascinated by different ways to

increase the palette of expressive options available to people who may not be able to afford or access traditional opportunities.

Julian developed a train-the-trainer curriculum at the Royal Conservatory of Music Artists in Education Program. Working with Naty Trembley, he has provided anti-oppression

training for many arts organizations including Vibe Arts, Unity, WAHC, and MYSEUM of Toronto among others.

Julian recently became the Creative Director at SKETCH (www.sketch.ca), past projects include supporting The Good Guise, which engages young racialized men to explore healthy masculinity and relationships (<https://www.sketch.ca/publicart/mplr/>). For his work on equity and anti-oppression, he was awarded the William P. Hubbard Race Relations Award by the City of Toronto in 2017.

Youth Artist Pieces & Statements



“Trading Places” by dairysam

Medium: Comic

Trading Places is a comic and illustration about change through conversations. Through an ideal and fantasy world of nature and trading where people and nature are the priority; there are characters discussing what is commemorated now, as well as in the past and future. The questions are more broad. For me, art, culture, parks and places of such manner need to be commemorated but also prioritized more. For the viewer, it's a thought through this fantasy land - what do you want to be commemorated? What is your fantasy land?

The Sound of Flavour by micha the happie [Click here to watch & listen](#)
Medium: Video



the light within me sees the light within you - Namaste

The spreading of seedlings on new land. Nurtured by ancient soil. the experience of sounds capturing a cacophony of what it's like to be alive in my communities. The history is rich with untold stories that like the 5th taste - Umami - the ones who flavor the canadian soup with seeds sown from our sorrows. The new world, better land - praised for us recognizing we are one.

How do we honor impact? Who decides what gets commemorated?

The nature of things is - change - I captured the sounds of the streets, convenient stores, hellos and small chit chats - layering & layering like a forest with mycelium links beneath. The spirits of refuge seekers are the flavourers of this new civilization. Our stories sing in the way we say hello and see you later. We bring the distinction 'village' to a cold & distant land. Images of paths & regeneration through nature sparks the sensations of feeling held and at home.

Growing up in the west countryside of jamaica in a small district called 'Friendship' - neighbors trade salt for flour and Howdy do's at any hour & kids playing outside is natural. I see ethnic immigrants from all walks of life, different dishes, accents and storytelling being the commemoration of lives well lived.

We celebrate the refuge seekers as home flavorers.

Video Transcription:
L'Chaim Metta i & i OM
Ase
Flames & Flavours
-seeking refuge
Someone's child, parent, partner
Threads sewn through stained blood
Ancient roots
Immigrant land
Nations nurtured here before
The human they named
The being the same home
When we arrived at first
we all bear the lost of our own kindred lands
Now we rejoice -
celebrating spirits dance from different sands.
Tears - washes us light
Romance the now
as village living becomes the joy of being alive.
We belonged here before our first breath
Northern nature chirps and cycles -
let the sounds of birds, squirrels
wind and grass
Eat up the deliciousness of the interdependency of our past.
L'Chaim Metta i & i OM
Ase

A Soundscape of Our City [Click here to listen.](#)

Contributing Artists: Ashley Meza-Wong, Saysah, micha the happie, dairysam, Ariel Sim
Medium: Audio

**Recognition Review:
Soundscape of Our City**

Inspired by the notion to begin and end with the land, this soundscape begins with the natural sounds of Toronto, building into an orchestra of sounds from each artist's neighbourhood.

Contributing Artists:

Ashley Meza-Wong Saysah

micha the happie dairysam

monumental

Inspired by the notion to begin and end with the land, this soundscape begins with the natural sounds of Toronto, building into an orchestra of sounds from each artist's neighbourhood.

Elder Artist Contribution

[A Brief Personal Reflection about Dundas Street by Julian Diego](#) [Click here to watch & listen](#)

Medium: Video

**A Brief Personal Reflection
about Dundas Street**

Creative Director of SKETCH, Julian Diego reflects on the history, modern intersections, and personal experiences living on Dundas Street.

Artist:

Julian Diego

monumental

Appendix C. Community Dialogue Summaries

City of Toronto Recognition Review Toronto Aboriginal Supports Services Council (TASSC) Leadership Dialogue

Summary of Key Findings

The following are recommendations to the City of Toronto from this group:

1. Naming and commemoration will be co-developed with Indigenous peoples, who should play a role in decision-making. A specific City of Toronto Indigenous advisory board, in the form of a Commemoration Circle, must be created to advise on, and play a decision-making role with regard to namings and public commemoration. The Commemoration Circle will be inclusive of the wide ranging voices and needs of the community, and include the specific participation of elders and youth. The naming and commemoration process itself will be respectful and include meaningful community engagement.
2. Language within the draft Guiding Principles will be strengthened, specifically, when the term “should” is used in this document, it should say “will”.
3. The Guiding Principles will be inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. This includes the integration of Indigenous values (ex. the Seven Grandfather Teachings) and other values important to Indigenous peoples including being respectful, meaningful, having integrity and including accountability back to Indigenous communities.
4. Namings and commemorations will have a respectful balance of the diversity of Indigenous communities. Names and commemorations will be inclusive of the First Nations rights-holders, treaty signatories, and local Indigenous languages. Namings and commemoration will also be inclusive of the many diverse voices of Indigenous communities in Toronto.
5. Names will be in local Indigenous languages, and be advised by fluent language speakers. Natural spaces will be exclusively named using Indigenous names. Namings will be reflective of Indigenous traditional protocols and be done in ceremony.
6. Naming and commemoration will consider influential elders and leaders, the memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, the memory of residential school victims and survivors, the memory of homeless relatives, and speak the truth of Indigenous history, including those stories that may be difficult to hear.
7. Naming and commemoration will be an important opportunity for public education to raise awareness of Indigenous peoples, history and ways of being.
8. All City of Toronto processes, including naming, commemoration and heritage processes, including how members of agencies, boards and commissions are appointed by the Indigenous community, must be reflective of Indigenous representation, reflective of the community, and how those qualities and qualifications are assessed by Indigenous people themselves.

City of Toronto Recognition Review
Toronto Aboriginal Supports Services Council (TASSC)
Leadership Dialogue

Meeting Record

Tuesday, April 19, 2022, 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Via Zoom Video Conference

Participants

- Linda Sandy, Toronto Aboriginal Supports Services Council
- Kenda Hoffer, Toronto Aboriginal Supports Services Council
- Suzanne Brunelle, Toronto-York Region Métis Council
- Emily Clairoux, Gabriel Dumont Non-Profit Housing
- Steve Teekens, Native Mens Residence
- Jeffrey Schiffer, Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- Melissa Hamonic, Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- Patti Pettigrew, Thunder Woman Healing Lodge Society
- Angelica de Jesus-Bretschneider, City of Toronto
- Jennifer Franks, City of Toronto
- Ben Macintosh, City of Toronto
- Bob Goulais, Facilitator, Nbisiing Consulting
- Ariel Sim, Conscious Creator
- Jenn Hayward, Nbisiing Consulting

Record of Discussion

Bob Goulais welcomes everyone and sets the purpose of the meeting: to provide input on the guiding principles of the City of Toronto's Recognition Review. The City of Toronto is working to establish/develop a process on how commemoration and naming will happen regarding City assets, streets, etc.

Bob offers tobacco for Steve Teekens to offer an opening. Steve offered a song.

Angelica de Jesus-Bretschneider, on behalf of the City, offers a Land Acknowledgement.

Bob begins with introductions and an icebreaker. He provides an overview of the agenda and general housekeeping points.

Ariel Sim states that they are looking to have the final report done in mid-May and then there will be a couple of weeks to complete final revisions and reflections before it is final.

Ben Macintosh begins with the guiding principles of the primary project, called the "*Recognition Review*," which was born out of a petition to rename Dundas Street. The City started to investigate options about how to respond and develop a framework to inform how they name public spaces. Ben stated that commemoration is not a way to erase history, but it is about honorifics and choosing how to reflect community values and spaces. Moving forward,

proposals that come in will have demonstrated community support, to ensure that underrepresented groups are able to voice their thoughts on the proposal. The City wants to ensure that they comply with legislation, bylaws, and policies to ensure that proposals do not contradict human rights and anti-harassment legislation and are not hateful in nature. The intent is to have a high-level vision statement that will inform how the City applies specific policies. The plan is to have a series of conversation circles with communities across the city, a public survey to seek broader feedback from the general public on the guiding principles, and a virtual Town Hall and panel discussion in May. Once all input and feedback has been considered, the City will be revising the guiding principles and a report will be presented to City Council in July with recommendations for final guiding principles that would be used going forward for naming and commemoration.

Ben concludes his presentation with discussing the renaming of Dundas Street. There is a Community Advisory Committee that is made up of local Black and Indigenous leaders, as well as other residents living/working along that street. The committee has been developing a shortlist of potential names for the street. Those conversations will continue over the Summer. In the Fall, the shortlist will be put out via survey for the public to respond. A new name will be recommended to City Council at the first meeting of the next council term.

Bob opened the conversation by asking for any questions from the participants.

What is the difference between the work of this group and that of the Heritage Board of the City of Toronto?

- o A participant had applied to the Heritage Board, as their intent was to create more Indigenous plaques and monuments around the City, as they are underrepresented. They were unsuccessful in gaining a position.
- o Heritage Toronto is one of the project partners on the new initiative. Heritage Toronto does recognize that there is a great deal of improvement that needs to be made to improve the representation of Indigenous stories through the plaques and programs. They are looking to hear from the community to understand how they can do better on that front.
- o The participant comments that the interview for Heritage Toronto was done by non-Indigenous people. They question what parameters would the interviewers have for scoring and measuring expertise for the only Indigenous seat on the board? The participant is Ojibway resident whose ancestors are from this area, while the other candidate, who was successful, is a Mi'kmaq who was new to the area.

How do we ensure adequate representation on these boards and in the decision-making process moving forward?

- o The City responded that this is something that is going to be part of the Reconciliation Action Plan, to make sure that the appointments are reflective of the Indigenous community.
- o A comment was made that this is happening more lately, where non-Indigenous boards are choosing who is going to be on their committees. This needs to stop, as it is important that people who are the boards understand the history of the territory they are

on. When this happens, it can create poor feelings. There needs to be better education surrounding this.

How can we move from education, scholarship, and academia and prioritize with community knowledge and connection?

- The City responded that co-development is key, including assignment of local Indigenous people to boards and tribunals and be an integral part of the assessment and interview processes.

The Leadership Dialogue began with a series of questions to the participants to reflect on family and community processes of commemoration.

How do you commemorate, or mark special events or milestones as Indigenous people?

- Spending time in nature, connecting to the land, to the water.
- Food, including traditional food.
- Getting together for ceremonies.
- Celebrating by having socials, get togethers, specific dances and songs for specific ceremonies, such as naming ceremonies.
- Commemorations of ancestors are done differently. Graves are only visited twice a year and are called “*cleaning the grave*”. The next opportunities are coming up soon, as will the strawberry ceremony.
- Moving back to their traditional territory and having family coming to visit on territory. Just by being on territory visiting connects family to the ancestors.
- Storytelling, sharing stories that have been passed from generations to generations.
- The Facilitator validated that events and milestones often involve activities that bring the people to the land.

In Indigenous communities, when you think of our streets, roads, etc., are there names that you like or don't like? Is there a best practice you'd like to share on how those things can be named. How should those assets be named?

- Naming is very specific in the Anishinaabe lodge, certain ceremonies that are only given by specific people who carry the language and have the gift of naming.
- A participant asked: When a new community (i.e. a subdivision) that is developed with new streets, who oversees naming the streets/crescents? Is it the developer? Is it true that these could be named after the developer's family?
 - The City responded: When there is a new street, the developer is asked to submit a name for consideration. It shouldn't be a member of the developer's family. They are asked to select a name that has demonstrated community support from immediate local residents with local councillors. There is not a lot behind this process, hence the need for a set of guiding principles and a set process.

- Other properties have different ways of naming. If it is a city park that has been developed, the City has a responsibility for selecting the name and goes out to the community to seek options.
- We need to look at how things have been named and how inclusive naming has been for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. That process needs to be evaluated. This includes for building naming, which is often influenced by monetary considerations. This document and guiding principles should be applied to everything rather than the current system used.
- The Toronto Islands should be renamed. We should look at the history of the people when it comes to land recognition. They are the people who should be consulted about the names. Co-development, and moving beyond consultation, is not difficult.
- Elders and youth would come forward from the different nations in a council format to discuss various projects, streets, and lands. A “Commemoration Council” or working group would be inclusive of elders and youth in these processes.
- The Facilitator validated the idea of a Commemoration Council that could advise on naming and commemoration from the Indigenous perspective.
- Rouge Valley should also be renamed. Native Child has a sweat down there.
- The Facilitator commented that many of these names are held by the provincial or federal governments which have a naming boards and distinct processes themselves.
- Anything that’s natural should have an Indigenous name.
- For the Métis, there are landmarks where certain events took place. i.e. the Battle of Seven Oaks Trials. The Facilitator mentioned the send off and welcome back locations of the Queen’s Own Rifles and the Royal Grenadiers to suppress the Northwest Rebellion, changing the Métis people’s trajectory. Being mindful that these events are more recent than that of the original peoples.
- We need to envision a Circle, where these could be discussed thoughtfully before decisions are made.

The Facilitator asked for Feedback on the draft Guiding Principles.

- Using page three as an example, whenever it says “*should*” in this document, it should say “*will*.” It is supposed to be a meaningful and co-developed process, the language needs to be strengthened to show clear and direct commitment.
- Celebrating untold stories. Mainstream education and media has watered down so much history.
- Individuals and groups who spearhead meaningful political changes should be honoured in public spaces.
- Having more First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people be reflected in these monuments (i.e. Louis Riel).
- Names should not only point to our past, but to our present and toward our future.

What stories should be told?

- Who are the elders and leaders that have been guiding us all along? Ex. Vern Harper, Lillian McGregor, and all those we honour. Can they be considered for naming opportunities?
- Missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. These women need to be commemorated. We need to recognize those women and girls missing and murdered and remember their names.

- o Indigenous women should be reflected and their contributions to addressing issues (MMIWG, gender-based discrimination under the Indian Act).
- o We should consider recognizing those relatives who have died on the streets. They were human beings, and they should not be forgotten. There should be a commemorative wall(s) with their names on them.
- o Language is an incredibly important piece. Connection to language connects us to who we are. We should be careful not to always translate our language back to English, to encourage people to learn the traditional languages of the territory.
- o Considerations for language, representation, and arts should be discussed with the Mississaugas of the Credit to see how they feel.
- o A plaque speaking to the history of Mississauga Treaty 13 should be considered including the story of how it was a blank treaty where the signatures were added later on in a separate document.
- o We should not be afraid to tell those stories that reflect those difficult truths, no matter how uncomfortable they may be for non-Indigenous Canadians.

Who should participate in naming and commemoration?

- o Elders, youth, language speakers.
- o Making sure that it is represented by the nations within the territory but also visiting nations.

How should this process feel? How can the process be more heart-centered?

- o There is a certain way we do things in the Lodge. The names are spoken to the four directions. It is making sure the Spirit is there by going through that process in ceremony.
- o Glad that we're finally in a place in our lives where we can have this conversation. I'd like for it to feel not tokenized or glad handing. Not being limited to one or two monuments, but something that is normalized and integrated across the whole city.
- o Envisioning a Commemoration Circle, where Indigenous leaders can discuss. Looking at the values of different people, and how they overlap and intersect. We would do a good job in that Circle. I'm happy that we've come to this point because there are many names in Toronto that don't make any sense and we don't understand why they are there. It would enrich the city, and we could talk about the history behind those names.
- o The opportunity for public education should always be there, no matter what process we go through. An example is, if we hold a circle, we can educate about what the circle signifies. Educate people about ceremony and why we smudge. Whoever does a traditional opening should educate about why the opening is important. Every step of the way, it needs to be respectful. Names should be an opportunity for education. To teach about the Seven Grandfather teachings.
- o Have conversations ahead of time, so that it doesn't feel like tokenism. Continuing the conversation and being part of the process early on. Anything you can learn through education or educating others.
- o It is important to come to the community early in the process. Collaborating with the community together.
- o Indigenous names should be part of every commemoration process. There should be a respectful process that is meaningfully engaged, that is co-developed. To ensure there is a Circle of people that is brought together to help advise the process.

- o The process should be inclusive of Indigenous values. Other values include integrity and accountability. Integrity is an incredibly important piece and important to validate that you are accountable back to the Indigenous community.
- o Indigenous names should be central to the consideration of all names across the City. This was validated as a priority by the group.
- o What does it mean to get together in a Circle and have integrity in the process? Having the City officials behind this involved and educating them on some of the protocols when you ask for a name, and how you should pass tobacco in that way.
- o When we are clear about our purpose and intent for bringing communities together, we can do well, though sometimes the conversations go in different directions.
- o Naming, renaming and this process needs to be inclusive of Indigenous protocols and be ceremonial. By doing it in that good way, the feeling that will come from that is such a feeling of pride within the people. By doing it in that good way, it can't help but create good feelings amongst all the members of our communities.
- o The thing that I get concerned about is that we, Indigenous people, need to be in control of this. Too many times, it will go back to the City, and it'll get changed and we are left wondering who changed it, and how did this happen.
- o We must enlighten every City worker, everybody in the City of Toronto, they need to be enlightened about this and educated. It is one thing for the Mayor and all the people in the upper echelons of the City to be spouting the rhetoric about reconciliation but if it doesn't get down into the grassroots and the very people who have their boots on the ground, it doesn't mean a thing.
- o We need to be strong. This is an important project that will change the landscape of Toronto in many ways. If we do this in a good, ceremonial way, it can't help but change the vibration of Toronto for the better.
- o If the city is serious about collaboration, they should be serious about sharing decision-making.
- o I'd like to see plaques that commemorate Indigenous history in Toronto. Grateful that there is recognition of documenting painful and shameful stories because that is important. Truth and Reconciliation includes truth! Although some truths are difficult to hear, we need to hear them to avoid repeating them. An example is the first documented murder of an Indigenous woman near St. Lawrence Market. The plaque wouldn't be to commemorate this specific person but to tell the story of the first documented case of a murdered Indigenous woman that happened in Canada at the hands of a settler. Torontonians need to know the stories as well.
- o Working collaboratively with all Indigenous people.

Next Steps

- Additional input can be sent to Bob or directly to the City.
- A draft of the meeting record will be sent for review and input by April 29th.
- Once complete, the final report will be sent to all.

Closing Comments

Bob offered some of the key feedback points shared by the participants including: that Indigenous peoples be a key part of the process; the process be inclusive Indigenous Commemoration Circle or Commemoration Council; placing priority on Indigenous names; to make use of Indigenous languages; and that a process that is inclusive of Indigenous values.

Ben provided closing remarks on behalf of the City and shared his sincere appreciation to TASSC and the valuable contribution by all the participants.

Suzanne offered a closing on behalf of the group.

The Zoom session ended.

City of Toronto Recognition Review
MCFN Culture & Design Advisory Committee

Summary of Key Findings

1. In considering names in Indigenous languages, the City encourages their mainstream use by helping residents and visitors to pronounce them and understand their meanings.
2. As a part of the naming process, when Indigenous names are being considered, the elders, knowledge holders and language carriers should be given the opportunity to visit and walk land under consideration, to offer ceremony, and to connect with the spirit of the place.
3. A specific City of Toronto Indigenous advisory board, in the form of a Commemoration Circle, must be created to advise on, and play a decision-making role with regard to namings and public commemoration. The Commemoration Circle will include individuals with important skill-sets including having individuals who are language keepers, traditional knowledge holders, and have good communication and community outreach skills. Elders and youth should have a voice in this Circle.
4. The naming and commemoration process must include effective and meaningful engagement of First Nations rights-holders and Indigenous communities. Names should be taken back to the communities for input and feedback to ensure those names are supported by the many diverse Indigenous communities in Toronto.
5. Namings and commemorations will have a respectful balance of the diversity of Indigenous communities. Names and commemorations will be inclusive of the First Nations rights-holders, treaty signatories, and local Indigenous languages. Namings and commemoration will also be inclusive of the many diverse voices of Indigenous communities in Toronto.
6. All namings done in Indigenous languages, and commemorations involving Indigenous people, cultural and historical narratives, should include a community celebration and feast.
7. That the City includes the Mississaugas of the Credit (MCFN) *Design and Culture Advisory Committee* as an important advisory body to be actively consulted in all future naming and commemoration processes.
8. The City should ensure that, when Indigenous knowledge is shared by elders, knowledge holders and language keepers, their contributions be recognized by providing adequate honoraria to those participants. Honoraria should not be considered compensation, but in the spirit of gift-giving in acknowledging the sharing of Indigenous traditional knowledge.

City of Toronto Recognition Review MCFN Culture & Design Advisory Committee

Meeting Record

Wednesday, April 27, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
Via Zoom Video Conference

Participants

- Councillor Erma Farrell
- Caitlin Laforme, MCFN Culture and Events
- Jessica Maurice, MCFN Major Projects Office
- Angelica de Jesus-Bretschneider, City of Toronto
- Jennifer Franks, City of Toronto
- Ben Macintosh, City of Toronto
- Zahra Ebrahim, Monumental Projects
- Ariel Sim, Monumental Projects (contractor) / Conscious Creator
- Bob Goulais, Facilitator, Nbisiing Consulting
- Jenn Hayward, Nbisiing Consulting

Record of Discussion

Bob Goulais begins with a round table introduction of all participants present. Bob set the purpose of the meeting, as a focus group, to provide input on the guiding principles as part of the City of Toronto's Recognition Review. He explains that the feedback offered as a result of this review will lead to the establishment of a new process to guide naming and commemoration in the City of Toronto. Bob specifies that this process is focussed on naming and commemoration of City-owned assets.

Ben Macintosh begins by giving a quick overview of the Recognition Review, starting by discussing its purpose: to examine how public figures and events are commemorated in names and monuments throughout Toronto. He explains that, together with the renaming of Dundas Street, the City is looking to develop new guiding principles for naming and commemoration in the public realm.

He explains that commemorations are an honorific, not a statement of history – history will always be there; changing a commemoration does not rewrite history.

City staff are looking to bring a recommended set of guiding principles to City Council in July of this year. He hopes that the input gathered today and through other discussions with other community partners can be used to form those principles.

Ben provided an overview of the draft guiding principles. These were shared with participants in advance of the meeting. Ben highlights that Indigenous Placekeeping is an overall guiding principle, stating that the City wants to ensure it honours and recognizes the past, present, and future presence of Indigenous peoples on the land, and to use that recognition to guide the remainder of the work done.

Ben also discusses “Diversity our strength” as another guiding principle which informs the rest of their work. He explains that they’re putting this into practice by thinking about the diversity of the various communities that live in Toronto and having that diversity reflected through street names, monuments and other types of commemorations. The goal here is to prioritize the telling of stories of underrepresented communities. He says that there is a need to expand beyond street names and other monuments reflecting colonial history.

Ben goes on to state that in order to achieve this type of diversity in commemorations, the City would begin consulting and collaborating with community members early on in the process, including when it comes to selecting sites as well as names. He says that the City does want to ensure that all commemorations have community support; in particular, the support of those who are historically underrepresented in the City. This would achieve the next two guiding principles discussed: Co-Creation and Demonstrated Community Support.

A fifth principle is Relevance to Toronto. When the City is looking at opportunities for new names or new monuments, they want to ensure that they do so in a way that connects the name to the history and culture of the land. To do so, there would, again, be consultation with the communities living in the subject areas.

Ben clarifies that they are hoping to commemorate stories that aren’t told, reflected, or commemorated elsewhere. He uses the three Terry Fox statues in Toronto as an example. It is important, for sure, to commemorate his story. However, it is already very well known, and it’s equally as important to commemorate other stories not more widely seen in public spaces.

This brings Ben to the next principle: Historical and Community Research. The City wants to be sure that all decisions are grounded in solid historical research, including oral histories and traditional knowledge.

The final principle is to ensure that all decisions are made in compliance with legislation, City by-laws, and other policies including human rights and anti-harassment/discrimination legislation, by-laws, and policies.

The intention is that these principles will be used as a high-level visioning statement to inform the application of specific policies. For example, when looking at the street naming policy, these principles will be used to examine how the work is approached and to ensure that it is done in an equitable and community-centred way.

This particular project began in 2020 with the petition to rename Dundas Street. The policies and guidelines used by other cities across the globe were considered when drafting these guiding principles.

In order to ensure that the City receives the most community engagement, they are also conducting a city-wide survey. That information, together with the feedback received today, will be used to revise the draft guiding principles. Once revised, they will be presented to City Council in July of this year.

Due to the work involved in creating these principles, the City has decided to slow down on proposing new names for certain other public spaces, including Dundas Street, preferring to wait until 2023 to come to Council with proposed new names. By slowing down, Ben believes

that it will give the City more time to conduct additional research and consultation – in keeping with these draft guiding principles.

Ben concludes his presentation. Bob opened the conversation by asking for any questions from the participants.

Will the City learn how to pronounce names suggested by First Nations people or other Indigenous peoples?

Councillor Erma is concerned the City will simply dismiss it and say “it’s too hard.”

Ben addresses her first question, stating that it would be something the City would consider. He states that all it would take is the time involved to inform the community on what the names are and how to say them. He also says that it gives the City an additional opportunity to decolonize its internal systems and ensure that they can respond to other languages traditional to the land. Ben acknowledges that it will take significant work on the part of the City, but that it’s work the City is more than willing to take on.

Will the City pay to bring them to that specific spot, since, it is customary to be able to walk the land and feel the space before offering a name?

As to Councillor Erma’s second question, Ben states that he had not considered it before, but that it will be something he thinks about in terms of implementation. Bob shared that this is an important consideration and validated the Councillor’s question and sentiment.

Since they are slowing down the process of re-naming Dundas Street, does this mean that Council will not be making a decision this July and that instead it will come back in 2023?

Ben confirms that the renaming of Dundas will come back to Council in January of 2023. This will be one of the first meetings of the new session of Council. This decision has not yet been made public, but will be communicated over the City’s website soon. He clarifies that, although the decision to re-name Dundas Street will be delayed until there is a new council, these guiding principles will be presented in July of this year, prior to the next election.

Bob asks a few questions to help the discussion about these guiding principles.

How do the Michi Saagiig commemorate certain events or people?

Councillor Erma shared the process that MCFN has been using to consider and adopt names. Often proposals come from community members and are brought to the Chief and Council. For example: the Lloyd S. King Elementary School, a naming commemorating a child who passed from leukemia, and the installation of benches honoring individuals who passed in an accident.

The Councillor also described the process that the community uses for their annual recognition awards. That is a more formal process with a Terms of Reference. Sometimes families do have traditional naming ceremonies that are conducted in the community.

For the Lloyd S. King Elementary School, they had a community ceremony.

In Indigenous communities, when you think of our streets, roads, etc., are there names that you like or don't like?

Bob shared an example of when he passes by a school or building named after colonial figures, that it triggers him in a negative way. This is common amongst Indigenous peoples.

Councillor Erma shared that growing up, the history and the role of these people (i.e. John A. MacDonald) were accepted. People are just reawakening to these things including why Dundas Street is being renamed. Many names are colonial and they don't come from Indigenous perspectives at all. The Councillor shared that Toronto was called Ishpaadina (the high place) and Adoobigook (the place of the Alder trees). The name for Etobicoke is an Ojibwe name.

Bob shared that the name Tkaronto is named for the place in the narrows on the other side of the Carrying Place trail. Yet that is the name that was chosen for the City.

How does MCFN think public assets and spaces should be named? What should the process look like, and how should the process feel?

Councillor Erma raises the idea of a naming and commemoration committee that could examine the naming of three or four public spaces at once. She believes this committee could be made up of individuals knowledgeable in several areas, including cultural awareness, communication, and outreach. The Councillor confirmed that including elders in the process would be ideal, as they can offer a different way of looking at things that can be important.

Bob asks Jess how the process should look and feel from a major project's perspective. She focuses on the engagement aspect, stating that it is very important to ensure that everyone has a voice at the table.

The group resumes discussing the importance of engagement in the process, including the process for consulting with community members, elders, and knowledge holders. Councillor Erma confirms that participants who provide advice should be selected based on their strengths and knowledge base. The MCFN Design and Culture Advisory Committee could play a role in the City of Toronto's naming and commemoration process by being an advisory body. She clarifies that names could be provided upon request but would prefer if a number of requests came forward in a coordinated way so they could do three or four proposals at once.

The discussion then moves to the role of language, particularity, to language keepers and the importance of ensuring that they are recognized and provided with an adequate honorarium. Bob encourages those from the City to consider the important role language keepers and knowledge holders play in these processes. Often these individuals are retired or on fixed incomes.

The Facilitator asked for feedback on the draft Guiding Principles.

Jess Maurice offered that she appreciated the guiding principle of co-creation and focus on community engagement. These are really important. This includes ensuring the process is inclusive of the MCFN.

Councillor Erma requested that the City allow for the participants to review the draft guiding principles and be given some time to share additional, specific comments on the draft. Bob committed to re-sharing the draft guiding principles by email.

Caitlin Laforme asks about the last principle: compliance with legislation. Ben states that the intention is to make it clear that the City will not accept any proposals that could be viewed as discriminatory.

The group then discusses considerations for the future when naming public spaces, specifically the need to be more proactive. There is a discussion about moving away from naming things after individuals and about highlighting individuals from underrepresented communities.

Caitlin offered a comment that, sometimes, when names are given to commemorate individuals there are sometimes sensitivities. For example: if certain aspects of history are revealed, (i.e. Ryerson) or the name is changed (Six Nations Arena), there could be bad feelings.

Closing Comments

Bob closed the meeting and committed to providing a meeting record for review by the participants in the next week. He encouraged the Committee members to provide written comments on the draft guiding principles by email as soon as possible. City staff will submit their report to City Council in July 2022.

City of Toronto Recognition Review Huron-Wendat Nation

Summary of Key Findings

1. That the City of Toronto consider supporting opportunities for sharing and cultural exchange associated with Indigenous names and commemoration between Indigenous communities and the other diverse communities in Toronto as a means of building bridges and supporting reconciliation.
2. That naming contests, where multiple options are put forward for selection by either decision-makers or the public, are not consistent with Indigenous name-giving traditions and may cause friction between nations. These types of competitive processes, when involving Indigenous names or considerations, should be discouraged.
3. That the City consider co-creating a process that will see each nation in the territory, and the broader Indigenous communities in Toronto, be given the opportunity to provide a name when naming opportunities come available.
4. That direct engagement between the City of Toronto and First Nations rights-holders will continue to be an important part of commemoration in the public realm.
5. A specific City of Toronto Indigenous advisory board, in the form of a Commemoration Circle, must be created to play a key role with regard to namings and public commemoration.
6. The draft guiding principle respecting “Relevance to Toronto” does not reflect the reality that Indigenous history pre-dates the establishment of Toronto. Many cultures may want to reflect people, events or stories that may not be related to Toronto. This guiding principle should be reflected as an important consideration but not an exclusionary requirement.
7. That the City, in collaboration with First Nations-rights holders, consider modelling a naming and commemoration process based on the concept of finding consensus amongst First Nations in the territory.
8. That colonial names and commemoration, especially those commemorating John A. MacDonald, must be reconsidered or re-contextualized to reflect the truth from the perspective of Indigenous peoples.

City of Toronto Recognition Review Huron-Wendat Nation

Meeting Record

Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 10:00 p.m.
Via Zoom Video Conference

Participants

- Dominic Ste-Marie, Huron-Wendat Nation
- Angelica de Jesus-Bretschneider, City of Toronto
- Jennifer Franks, City of Toronto
- Bob Goulais, Facilitator, Nbisiing Consulting

Record of Discussion

Bob Goulais began by introducing Dominic and Angelica. Bob set the purpose of the meeting to obtain input from the Huron-Wendat Nation on the draft guiding principles that are part of the City of Toronto's Recognition Review process. He explains that the feedback offered as a result of this review will lead to the establishment of a new process to guide naming and commemoration in the City of Toronto.

Dominic asked: Is this process related to the previous conversations that Dominic had with Jennifer related to naming of Dundas Street?

Jennifer Franks acknowledged that this process is related and has come as a result of the request to rename Dundas Street. That naming process actually began before this process. The City will reach out to the Huron-Wendat Nation to obtain their input into the Dundas Street naming process. Future naming and commemoration will follow a more formal process guided by these draft principles.

Dominic Ste-Marie understood saying that the Dundas renaming was the "spark that led to the whole fire". Jennifer concurred. She added that, given that the Dundas Street renaming process has slowed down, this is an opportunity to have direct discussion with the Huron-Wendat Nation.

Dominic shared his thoughts on naming city assets using a public "contest". This is quite limiting as Wendat names, and Indigenous names in general, have a lot of meaning. Some Wendat names are not permanent and may change for various reasons.

However, he did say that there may be means to involve Indigenous nations in these "contests". For example: if each nation provided a suggestion for a name and the public or community voted upon that. Or if the public chose a theme, and Indigenous peoples came up with the name based on that theme. He also described a way to create a preferential ballot, when the public/or community rank their preferred name. Then the other names that are not selected could be used for various sub-districts of Dundas Street, for example.

Dominic also described having a system where the various nations could take turns to give a name as requests are brought forward. For example, Wendat, Michif, Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee etc. Even the broader urban Indigenous communities could bring forward a name. But it would also need to consider the prominence of the asset. This may be a means of ensuring equity.

Dominic indicated that some would see that as crowning a “victorious” nation or proposal which can cause challenges.

Angelica de Jesus-Bretschneider began the presentation stating that this meeting is to obtain insight and input on the draft guiding principles that the City is developing. This includes acknowledging and commemorating the memory of people, places, events and ideas. This would apply to all public spaces, streets, parks and other civic properties, as well as monuments and other artworks. The City wants to ensure that the guiding principles reflect community values, are inclusive and equitable, and also supports reconciliation and anti-Black racism.

Jennifer shared the draft guiding principles, beginning with the importance of Indigenous placekeeping, reflecting that “diversity is our strength”, the importance of co-creation or “nothing about us, without us”. She also spoke to ensuring the proposals are supported by the community, that they are relevant to Toronto, and celebrate untold stories. The names and commemoration proposals must also include historical and community research, which includes Indigenous traditional knowledge, and that the proposals must be compliant with human rights and anti-harassment legislation, bylaws and policies.

Dominic shared that there may be some names that may be acceptable for one nation but be controversial for other nations. For example: making reference to the Peacemaker’s name.

Jennifer said this is a good point. This circumstance may not necessarily be about policy but more aligned with those Indigenous protocols that will be discussed during engagement and co-creation.

Angelica concluded the presentation by sharing a diagram on how the guiding principles will apply to a street naming policy, a property naming policy which includes parks, ravines, recreation centers and arenas, and a public arts and monuments policy, which includes commemorative plaques.

Dominic asked: Has there been any thought to cross-cultural communication (ex. Toronto Jamaican community) and how they can support and understand Indigenous understanding of place, names and commemoration?

Dominic said that there may be ways to share different ways to represent what places mean to them as well.

Jennifer shared that the City may be exploring the development of cultural districts that includes ways to share the living heritage of certain communities. This includes Indigenous placekeeping. Dominic referred to the Ethennonnhawahstihnen' park and how diverse communities can share in their understandings of that name. It can be a way to build bridges between communities.

How do the Wendat go about naming or commemorating people, places or events in your community?

Dominic explained that this is a multi-step process. For example: names of archaeological sites, or names commemorating veterans. But given the large number of requests they receive, they have not formalized their process. They often adapt names according to the needs and requirements of the partners they work with. They would take that name and seek agreement from their elders. It may go back to Council. They seek ways to represent the area, the history, and the spirit of the place. They will choose names that are durable but names are not always permanent as they may be adjusted depending on the use of the site.

He said that having a competitive process for naming (i.e. a public contest) is a way to over-simplify an important process. It may also divide nations if names were chosen that way as it is popularity-based. It may indirectly “cheapen” the value of a name in an attempt to satisfy people. Indigenous names have meaning.

Can you speak to the ways that the Wendat give or receive names?

According to Dominic, Wendat traditional names are given to them by the people around us. They will rely on those who know the family or individual. But even these names are not permanent, and may change depending on the life circumstance of the individual. For example, when someone is elected Grand Chief. There were ceremonies for name giving but those are not as common anymore.

How would the City build consensus amongst diverse Indigenous nations, and who should participate in these processes?

There are a number of different levels including: the various nations of people in the territory; the many different languages and dialects; there is also the broader Indigenous community of Toronto. Do we seek names from each of these groups, or do we come together in a cross-national gathering to choose a name? All of these factors make this a complex question.

The City may want to consider a “rolodex” of nations – basically flipping through and taking turns in giving a name to certain assets. For example: a name would be provided in Michif, while the next name would be Anishinaabe, and so on. This would help find a balance. This may be a model to involve other non-Indigenous nations as well. For example: considering names in Haitian or Jamaican Creole. This is inclusive of the Indigenous values of openness and sharing.

The Wendat may be willing to participate in an Indigenous Commemoration Circle but this should be more of an advisory body. This does not replace the requirements to engage in government-to-government discussions on commemoration. However, this could be an additional means of better really understanding Indigenous perspectives and interests.

Which of the draft Guiding Principles resonate with you the most? Which Guiding Principles may need some more work?

The “relevance to Toronto” principle can be a double-edged sword. Some nations may have people or narratives that are important in their culture, but are not directly related to Toronto. For example: Chinese Canadians may want to name a street after Confucius. There is a lot of history and culture

that pre-dates the establishment of Toronto. This guiding principle should be a consideration but not a requirement.

Dominic suggested that inclusion of the local Indigenous communities is also incredibly important as they commemorate people who have lived here in the past, and people who live here now.

How should the commemoration process feel? Is there a certain way that this should take place, and what are the values that should drive it?

Dominic referenced the time when discussions and decision-making was done around the fire in the longhouse. They made these decisions based on finding consensus. The dialogue would continue until a decision was made. It wasn't about everyone being happy but coming up with a decision that everyone can accept. This concept of finding consensus may be a model for Indigenous considerations in naming and commemoration.

The value of being equitable is quite important and should be considered a guiding principle when it comes to Indigenous considerations. It would be good to see names that reflect the Wendat but there are other nations in the territory and in the urban Indigenous community.

When it comes to commemoration, Dominic feels that engagement is important. This goes beyond words or public art pieces. There should also be communications and information posts that educate and create an awareness of Indigenous peoples. For example: the City may want to celebrate the First Parliament site. Other communities can share their connection to those places. It would be interesting to tell the story of the Haudenosaunee influence on western democracy. He said it's about opening people's eyes to different conceptions.

Are there any areas in the City that should have Wendat names parts of the City or streets that the names that may not be appropriate anymore?

Most obviously, the City should modify, at the very least, or to re-contextualize at the worst, anything that relates to John A. MacDonald. This isn't about re-writing or destroying history, but adding important context from Indigenous perspectives.

As for places in Toronto, the Wendat would be interested in naming and commemorating areas near waterways or that have unique features.

Next Steps

Bob committed to providing Dominic with the draft meeting record for his review by the end of the week.

On behalf of the City, Angelica offered thanks to Dominic and appreciated his ideas and comments on the process.

City of Toronto Recognition Review Project

2SLGBTQ+ Community Dialogue

APRIL 13 2022

Study and Facilitation Team:

Zahra Ebrahim (Monumental), Benjamin Bongolan (Monumental), Venesha Cardwell (Monumental), Angelica de Jesus-Bretschneider (City of Toronto), Karlene Williams-Clarke (The 519)

Overview of Session:

Working with the lead organization The 519 - a City of Toronto Agency committed to the health, happiness, and well-being of 2SLGBTQ+ communities - this session brought together 9 community leaders that included representatives from the 2-Spirited community, and leaders from grassroots community groups and established community organizations working in the fields of health promotion for Black Communities, Trans Community Services, and immigration & settlement.

The conversation was structured around two themes: *Your Experience & The Names and Their Impact* and *The Process of Naming and The Principles*. This meeting was held virtually over Zoom and hosted by Monumental Projects Inc.

Key Takeaways and Insights:

Acknowledging painful legacies to help the general public understand important histories

- Alexander Wood's ties to Residential School survivors – Alexander Wood raised funds to build these schools; the statue at Church and Alexander was taken down, but a lot of people do not know why it was taken down.
- Genocide and colonialization must be discussed, especially within the context of reconciliation.
- “The statue at X University- there were a lot of residential school survivors with their families there -it was a big thing for people.”
- Many Indigenous burial sites throughout the City of Toronto should be recognized.

How participants commemorate

- Personal commemoration – celebrations with food, drinks, and music.
- 'If someone passes, we hold a sacred fire to send someone on their journey in a good way'.
- Sacred fires for Trans day of remembrance, Trans day of visibility, PRIDE, and more.
- Naming ceremonies.

Representation from Newcomer Communities

- Canada is home to many newcomers with diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Commemoration of newcomers to Canada is rarely recognized. Every culture has their own story and it should be recognized. E.g. on money.
- The railway was built by the Chinese People. There is a monument located at 1 Blue Jays Way. Chinese people donated money to build it. If we have the chance, the railway people should be represented on a monument or name to put on the street.
- Newcomers to Canada often seek communities they identify with upon arrival to build relationships. E.g. small communities such as Little Italy and Little Portugal. “There’s that feeling that even when we walk through those streets it doesn’t represent us.”

Commemoration Processes

- Statues of those who have not contributed to the betterment of the country in a good way are erected. Those who have done good and made good contributions should be recognized.
- Some visit new cities in Ontario and numerous cities share the same street names. e.g. Church street, Queen street. “How well are we representing our city with these generic names?” We are not doing a good job of representing our city with those generic names if we claim we are diverse.

Quotes

'Indigenous place-keeping should have a heavier weight as a principle'

'Celebrating untold stories – this principle stands out for me'

'Demonstrating community support and community engagement – I'm hesitant about this, especially for Indigenous communities, governments sometimes don't do this in a meaningful way'

'Do I feel like I've been involved in a commemorative process? No. Because of my experiences and upbringing in Toronto, co-creation for me is really important as a guiding principle'

“There’s that feeling that even when we walk through those streets it doesn’t represent us. I don’t know what Dufferin means, it autocorrects to suffering.” The low, quiet voices must be captured.”

“The statues we put up in my home country have bad connections with the Indigenous communities back home – we need to be aware of the Indigenous communities in Toronto too.”

Recommendations for the City:

- 1) In different areas at Spadina there are words in Anishinabek. By High Park subway; Quebec Avenue. It’s not appropriate for Indigenous People to see ‘Indian Road’ and names like that. The city needs to reach out more to all communities, mostly Indigenous because we need First Nations tribes to live in the city. There should also be a representative from all the First Nations tribes present in these processes.
- 2) There needs to be a local community-based understanding of who should be participating. E.g. representatives from diverse social groups; The City of Toronto.

Education is necessary for all to understand the importance of renaming streets due to discrimination. E.g. Indian Road.

- 3) Having an elder or elders from the Indigenous community, like an elders council should be welcomed and present at the table. There are also elders in Black communities and 2SLGBTQ+ communities and they should be present in the conversations. Celebrating untold stories through diversity and strength. We want to see more representation of various communities E.g. Indigenous Peoples, Asian, newcomers, BIPOC, etc.
- 4) We need more local voices; not the owner of the building – but the people who are in those spaces every day
- 5) Be aware of how we approach communities. Some communities may be hesitant to speak with a public official and may be more open to share their opinion in a less official setting
- 6) Being careful not to make assumptions about how people relate to institutions. Some people don't feel safe. There needs to be a plurality. People have already started to celebrate and commemorate; therefore, it should not be treated as a new approach.
- 7) Communities support and engagement has to be done in a meaningful way. Engagements need to be individualized for each community.
- 8) Being careful not to make assumptions about how people relate to institutions. Some people don't feel safe. There needs to be a plurality. People have already started to celebrate and commemorate; therefore, it should not be treated as a new approach.
- 9) We need many ways people to come together, discussion is one way, but a lot of people communicate in other ways.

Community Dialogue Summary Black Community Leaders & Organizations

When. April 26th, 2022.

Host. Monumental Projects and The Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC).

Guests. 6/10 invited guests attended including, Rose-Ann Bailey, Kemi Jacobs, Joseph J. Smith, Anan Lololi, Kizito Musabimana, and Horace Spence.

Facilitated by. Tenisha Blair, Knowledge, and Gary Newman, alongside Angelica from the City of Toronto.

Format. Welcoming and arrival, land acknowledgment, opening the circle, conversation circle, closing the circle, next steps, and gratitude.

Summary. Following is a summary of the highlights, concerns, values, and recommendations that emerged from the discussion and 35 pages of notes and transcripts.

High-Level Highlights

- The city of Toronto should include the history of the people it is naming a street or building after, including education and health care to make sure that all facets of society are acknowledged.
- I would like to see more street names based on principles or values than after people. I would like to see people from Africa included in street names, and we should include people who are still alive, as well as those who helped people in the past.
- 'There needs to be an education component to naming and commemoration', 'we don't want to only look back on the past, but 'we want names that are future-oriented, and 'there should be community-engagement for each naming audit, research, and commemoration process.'

Concerns

Participants' main concerns included:

- I am an immigrant, like many others, and I think that naming a street or a building doesn't mean much if it doesn't have some significance for the community that it is named after.
- The city of Toronto needs to go deeper than just changing a name, and has to include all the facets of society, like education, health care, and whatever else, to make sure that the history is acknowledged.
- Just because a person is black or Indigenous doesn't mean that they're for the people they are named after. Research on the people to be named after is important, but who's responsible for doing that research?
- Changing the name of a colonial building will not transform its appearance, we need to allow Indigenous designers to profit from the change and include African and Diaspora influences
- I think it's important to leave something so people know that it was there

Values

Several values that participants thought were important to consider when commemorating:

- I would like to see more places named after principles or values than after people, more so after the work of someone who pushed us forward.

- Looking at a name is like looking for a whole meal because it's about the street, the community, what experiences, and who's living there.
- We would like to acknowledge people that have impacted our community, including people from Africa, when we name a new community center.
- The street names are important for bringing people into space. This is important because growing up, many of the street names left us feeling like we were not meant to be there.
- The name of a street or a building can represent the values of the person who lived there.
- It's about creating spaces, creating a sense of ownership, building pride and knowledge, and making black culture alive for those who are coming up behind.
- When we think about leaders, we should also think about the people that helped them to be and that's why when we have a leader, we should also have people with us.
- It's not solely about the past, but also about the future, and I think to actually be able to commemorate the future there are still people alive that are doing amazing things.
- There are so many incredible people in Toronto, including scientists, artists, and even the Lego artists, that should be highlighted and not a legacy of a white savior or somebody who saved a particular group.
- We're trying to make up for lost times, by including the names of people who were left out of the history books.
- 'The stories we highlight should not always be about a "deficit", let's highlight stories beyond slavery. Slavery and colonization are just small parts of our history. White people made our history start there.'
- Let's honor people who are still alive
- 'I want to commemorate the resistance and resilience of my community
- Build pride, make Toronto be a place that celebrates Black culture and Indigenous culture

How would you envision the process of providing a name that honors the way of life of this community?

Participants noted key steps and processes including:

- 'City should do an entire audit and personalize the naming process like you are doing with us by having a conversation
 - o 'There should be engagement for each proposal'
 - o 'Why not start with new streets and not necessarily rename all streets?'
- 'I do not want to look back on the past, I want names to be future-oriented.
 - o But also acknowledge in some way why those past names are problematic so we can learn from it
- 'There needs to be an education component to naming and commemoration' i.e. promote street names with walking tours to show the path or history of the place
 - o 3D walking tours > inviting younger generations into a space
 - o QR codes in spots across the city to acknowledge our communities and their triumphs
 - o Provide monuments with a slab of information

Recommendations

The 5-10 recommendations we'd like to put forward:

- Does the commemoration create space for my identity and the narratives I most closely relate to?

- Does the commemoration foster a sense of ownership?
- Did the commemoration and naming process utilize a community-engaged approach from start to celebrations?
- Did the commemoration and naming process balance past-present-future-oriented considerations for naming and recognition?
- Has the commemoration process considered the values and principles as weighing more than the person, group of people, or community who 'demonstrated' those values and principles?

Community Dialogue Summary Diverse Youth

When. April 28th, 2022.

Host. Monumental Projects and The Students Commission of Canada.

Guests. 7/8 guests attended, including Limees Rizeig, Marissa Watson, Harry Lutumba Mpongo, Polina Vaynshtok, Kezia Williams, and Safiya Keita.

Facilitated by. Tenisha Blair, Knowledge, and Gary Newman, alongside Angelica from the City of Toronto.

Format. Welcoming and arrival, land acknowledgment, opening the circle, conversation, closing the circle, next steps, and gratitude.

Summary. Following is a summary of the highlights, concerns, values, and recommendations that emerged from the discussion and 39 pages of notes and transcripts.

High-Level Highlights

- Toronto should include in its street naming policy the history of the people it is naming a street or building after, and include people who are still alive and those who helped people in the past
- I think it's important to acknowledge bad situations in Toronto's history, change street names to honor good people, and promote gatherings to honor people and history that matter to newcomers
- Celebrating significant people or even children helps bring positive things out in communities, inspires others to become more open-minded and comfortable with change, and honors people who have contributed to the community
- The history behind the names of streets should be taught in schools, more community members should be involved, and people of color, Indigenous people, LGBTQ plus, and more people should be educated about these topics

Concerns

Participants' main concerns included:

- Street names should be changed because some people they are named after weren't good, but not at the expense of not acknowledging and educating people who come to Canada about the bad situations
- If we only focus on popular streets like Dundas, then the names of streets, buildings, and roads in my community may be ignored, and they should be changed to honor or commemorate a person that has made a positive impact on the community.
- Are the principles local enough because I feel like commemorating the good parts of my community, especially the youth groups and small community groups who are part of different ethnicities, would help out a lot, especially in communities that don't have a lot of good stereotypes attached to them
- No place in the city honors or commemorates a person or history that matters to me, and the names of the streets, buildings, and roads in my community are not what I usually think about. I neither like nor dislike any of the names, I do, however, find a few of them odd.
- Do these principles promote more gatherings, especially for newcomers? i.e. social media is one way, but think about how older generations connect and communicate

- 'These names and principles were not relevant to me until I found out we could change them. Do we have a choice in this? I was shocked to see that we did.'

Values

Several values that participants thought were important to consider when commemorating:

- We believe that commemorating significant people, or even children, is important because they inspire others to become more open-minded and comfortable with change even if they are not famous
- We believe younger people being represented would inspire other young people
- Naming places after Indigenous Peoples or Black people would give a sense of pride and honor
- I want to see more representation in street names, schools, and buildings

How would you envision the process of providing a name that honors the way of life of this community?

Participants noted key steps and processes, including:

- The history behind the names of streets should be taught in schools
- More community members should be involved and fewer board members because they make all the calls. I also feel like more people of color, Indigenous people, LGBTQ plus, and more people should be educated about these topics.
- We should make sure that people commemorating people have had a background check, and we should give the people a voice in picking the names.
- The process should feel easy, inclusive, and like the community is making a difference.
- 'Fix this early on, instead of leaving it for future generations.'
- Commemorate the good parts, even the small moments – 'especially in neighborhoods that have bad stereotypes

Recommendations

The 5-10 recommendations we'd like to put forward:

- Naming and commemoration should always consider children and youth as people who can be commemorated
- The naming and commemoration process should leave me with a sense of pride in commemorating people who have done good things.
- The naming and commemoration process should leave me excited when I see new streets named after people who have done something in the community or Canada.
- The process should empower and support marginalized communities even if the commemoration isn't in or for a marginalized community.
- The little small moments are important and should be considered for commemoration because they make a difference.
- How will this impact future generations?