

City Hall
100 Queen Street West
East Tower, 4th floor
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Tel: 416-392-3551
Paul.R.Johnson@toronto.ca
www.toronto.ca

December 12, 2023

Mr. John Elvidge, City Clerk
City Clerk's Office
100 Queen Street West
12th Floor, West Tower
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mr. Elvidge,

Re: Administrative Inquiry Regarding Renaming Dundas Street

Councillor Holyday submitted an Administrative Inquiry to seek information on Renaming Dundas Street. This letter provides a response to this request. It has been developed in collaboration with Economic Development & Culture and Transportation Services.

Introduction

On July 14, 2021, City Council adopted recommendations to undertake a process to rename Dundas Street based on its namesake Henry Dundas' role in delaying the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Council directed the City Manager to convene a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to develop a shortlist of potential new names for Dundas Street and other City-owned assets bearing the Dundas name, and a transition plan to support impacted residents and businesses.

A 20-person CAC comprising Black and Indigenous leaders, along with other diverse residents and business owners living and working along Dundas Street was formed in fall 2021. Since then, the CAC has met regularly to discuss options for names and conduct related research.

Response

Please find below responses to each of the questions submitted.

- 1. What is the most recent assessment by staff of the total cost of renaming Dundas Street? Specifically, (a) what are the total costs that staff estimate will have to be paid by the city, the province, businesses and residents, if the city proceeds with changing the name of the street; and (b) what is the total cost, to date, for past spending on the renaming project, including but not limited to payments for consultants, community consultations, Community Advisory Committee meetings, honoraria, speakers, etc.?**

- a) The most recent 2023 estimated cost for renaming Dundas Street is approximately \$11.3 – 12.7 million. This includes preliminary estimates for costs to City divisions, agencies, corporations, residents, and businesses. The main drivers relate to Transportation Services, Toronto Transit Commission, Toronto Parking Authority, as well as other signage, communication, and public engagement costs.

Estimates have increased since figures were shared with Council in 2021, reflecting inflationary pressures, updated inventories, installation contract cost escalations, and additional resources required to plan and administer implementation.

Provincial costs are excluded from these figures as updated information was not available at the time of the preparation of this response. Impacted City Divisions, Agencies and Corporations will continue to refine cost estimates as implementation planning work progresses.

- b) The total cost of work on the Dundas Renaming project to date is approximately \$250,000. This includes consultants' fees, communications, consultations, and Community Advisory Committee meetings and honoraria.

2. How have staff incorporated information published in three peer-reviewed articles about Henry Dundas in the last two years into the information provided to the Mayor and Councillors? Specifically, what steps have staff taken to inform the Mayor and Councillors about the analysis of Professor Angela McCarthy in three articles published in the peer-reviewed journal *Scottish Affairs* in 2022 and 2023, regarding (a) the accuracy of accusations against Henry Dundas, (b) the responses of Edinburgh and Toronto to these accusations, and (c) newly unearthed archival evidence that shows that Henry Dundas was genuinely seeking to end the slave trade. If they do not intend to inform the Mayor and Councillors about this scholarship, what is the rationale?

City staff and the CAC are reviewing multiple sources of scholarship and research to inform potential new names for Dundas Street and other City-owned assets bearing the Dundas Name, as directed by City Council. This includes articles published by Professor Angela McCarthy in 2022 in *Scottish Affairs* -- titled "Historians, Activists and Britain's Slave Trade Abolition Debate: The Henry Dundas Plaque Debacle" and "Bad History: The Controversy over Henry Dundas and the Historiography of the Abolition of the Slave Trade" -- as well as her article published in *Scottish Affairs* in August 2023, titled "Henry Dundas and the Abolition of the Slave Trade: Further Evidence." Links to the 2022 articles were shared by the Henry Dundas Committee of Ontario with the Office of the Mayor and all members of Toronto City Council by e-mail on January 16, 2023.

City staff will be reporting to City Council on Dundas Street and asset renaming, as directed through [EX25.1, Recognition Review Project Update and Response to the Dundas Street Renaming Petition](#). City staff continue to receive and review new scholarship related to the life and legacy of Henry Dundas and will reference this scholarship in future reports to Council.

Historical evidence and peer reviewed academic scholarship are critical components informing staff advice to Council. As directed by Council, staff will also incorporate advice from impacted residents and communities, including findings from discovery sessions held with Black and Indigenous communities, Business Improvement Areas, and Residents' Associations. Staff advice to Council will also be informed by best practices from other Canadian and international jurisdictions.

Sincerely,



Paul Johnson
City Manager

cc:

Paul Raftis, Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services

Will Johnston, Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Services

Stephen Conforti, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer, Finance & Treasury Services

Barbara Gray, General Manager, Transportation Services, Infrastructure Services

Pat Tobin, General Manager, Economic Development & Culture, Community and Social Services