

Naming of a Public Lane South of Innes Avenue extending westerly from Caledonia Road to Gilbert Avenue

Date: January 26, 2023

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Engineering Support Services, Engineering & Construction Services

Wards: Ward 9 – Davenport

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the name "Habibi Lane" be approved to identify an existing public lane located south of Innes Avenue extending westerly from Caledonia Road to Gilbert Avenue.

This naming proposal complies with the City of Toronto Street Naming Policy which can be found at <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/street-naming/>

RECOMMENDATIONS

Engineering & Construction Services recommends that Toronto and East York Community Council:

1. Approve the name "Habibi Lane" for an existing public lane located south of Innes Avenue extending westerly from Caledonia Road to Gilbert Avenue.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost to install street name signage is approximately \$500 and is included within the Transportation Services Division's Operating Budget

DECISION HISTORY

This is the first time that this issue is before Community Council.

COMMENTS

An application was received on September 4, 2022, from a resident in connection with a laneway suite development, requesting to name the existing public lane located south of Innes Avenue extending westerly from Caledonia Road to Gilbert Avenue as "Habibi Lane", nodding to a widely used term of endearment in the Arabic speaking community.

The following background and rationale provided by the applicant:

"Habibi"

"Habibi is an Arabic word that literally means "my love" (sometimes also translated as "my dear", "my darling", or "beloved"). Habibi comes from the Arabic root word meaning "love", habib (masculine) or habiba (feminine) refers to a loved one. That final -i is a possessive – it turns "love" into "my love". It is used primarily as a pet name for friends, significant others, or family members. It is also frequently used in songs to give them a romantic feel. In everyday speech, however, habibi can be used from a parent to a child and between friends. In some places it's even common to use the word to soften interactions between strangers in the same way that people use the words hun, baby, and sweetie in some parts of the United States in social interactions.

This name has significance not only to the Arabic community but to the broader Arabic-speaking world. People of different ethnicities speak Arabic including African, Middle Eastern, and South-East Asian, many of whom have made Canada and Toronto their home. They are part of this community yet still largely under-represented in many aspects of social and political life. I believe, the Arabic heritage has huge significance to many communities in this city and should be represented more explicitly. Assigning this very widely-used Arabic term as a name for the subject Lane is a great start to encourage greater equity and inclusion and promote broader understanding of our diverse communities. "Habibi" is a term of endearment widely used by Arabic-speaking people. It directly translates to "my dear", "my love", or "beloved". It is a term that every Arabic-speaking person has often heard and often spoken growing up in an Arabic household. It is a positive, celebratory, and gender-neutral name well-known and understood even outside of Arabic-speaking communities. By assigning this name to the Lane we are recognizing and valuing the traditions and rich histories of Arabic communities across this city without associating the Lane with a specific person whom by definition is prone to fault either in the past, present, or the future."

The proposed name has been circulated for comment and is acceptable to Toronto Police Service, Toronto Fire Services, and Toronto Paramedic Services.

Councillor Alejandra Bravo, Ward 9 Davenport, supports this naming.

Community support was demonstrated with letters of support from property owners/residents who directly abut the lane.

Community Councils have delegated authority to decide street naming matters which comply with the City of Toronto Street Naming Policy.

The lane is shown as PART 1 on Attachment No.1 Sketch No. PS-2022-048

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Avi Bachar, P. Eng., Director, Engineering Support Services, Engineering &
Construction Services

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 Sketch No. PS-2022-048

Showing the location of an existing public lane located south of Innes Avenue extending westerly from Caledonia Road to Gilbert Avenue.

		
Innes Avenue		
Gilbert Avenue	PART 1	Caledonia Road
Toronto ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION SERVICES ENGINEERING SUPPORT SERVICES LAND & PROPERTY SURVEYS		
PROPERTY INFORMATION SHEET		
NAMING OF A PUBLIC LANE SOUTH OF INNES AVENUE EXTENDING WESTERLY FROM CALEDONIA ROAD TO GILBERT AVENUE		
NOTE: THIS SKETCH HAS BEEN COMPILED FROM OFFICE RECORDS, MEASUREMENTS ARE APPROXIMATE	WARD 9 - DAVENPORT DATE: JANUARY 11, 2023	
CHECK BY ANA MICHALEK PREPARED BY: DWAYNE PITT	SKETCH No. PS-2022-048	