

## **Naming Recommendation for 60 Howard Street Park**

**Date:** October 17, 2023  
**To:** Toronto East York Community Council  
**From:** Howie Dayton, Acting General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation  
**Wards:** Ward 13 - Toronto Centre

### **SUMMARY**

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On February 26, 2019, City Council requested through item MM3.21 that the City Manager report on the feasibility of naming a City Facility in honour of the late former Councillor, Dr. Gordon Chong. Council also gave staff the authority to commence the process under the City of Toronto Property Naming Policy in lieu of an application and report back with recommendations on the naming.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation worked with Strategic Partnerships, and consulted with the Chong Family and the local Councillor to identify 60 Howard Street Park as an appropriate location to commemorate the life, long-standing public service, activism and lasting impact of Dr. Gordon Chong.

On September 9, 2020, Council placed a short-term moratorium on namings and renamings as part of the Recognition Review and Dundas Street Renaming and through item EX16.3. Resumption of naming services commenced once the moratorium was lifted and after Council approved a new framework for commemoration in the public realm on July 19, 2022, through item EX34.6.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Acting General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division recommends that:

1. Toronto East York Community Council adopt the naming of 60 Howard Street Park, located at 60 Howard Street, to Dr. Gordon Chong Park.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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Funding for the costs associated with the production and installation of the new park sign will be accommodated within the 2023 Council Approved Operating Budget for Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

The Interim Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial implications as identified in the Financial Impact section.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting on February 26, 2019, City Council adopted Motion MM3.21 - Request for Report on Feasibility of Naming of City Facility After Dr. Gordon Chong. The motion directed "the City Manager to investigate the feasibility of naming a significant City park, facility or roadway in honour of the late former Councillor Dr. Gordon Chong, including consultation with the Chong family, and bring a recommendation to City Council for approval at or before its June 2019 meeting."

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.MM3.21>

## **COMMENTS**

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Over his long career, Dr. Gordon Chong served his community as a business leader and public official. Dr. Chong proudly practiced dentistry and represented downtown Toronto's Ward 6 (which included the Financial District, University of Toronto, and Chinatown) in the early 1980s. In 1994, Dr. Chong returned to municipal politics as a Councillor for Ward 11 in North York and continued serving the City until he retired from politics in 2000.

Throughout his career, Dr. Chong impacted the everyday life of Torontonians through his service on several boards, including the Toronto Transit Commission, GoTransit, the Metro Toronto Housing Authority, the Social Housing Services Corporation, the Toronto Police Services Board, the YMCA of Greater Toronto, and the Greater Toronto Services Board.

Dr. Chong was a pillar of Toronto's vibrant and diverse Chinese community and a passionate advocate for Chinese-Canadian and other race relationships. As a founding Director of the Federation of Chinese Canadian Professionals, a member of the Board of Governors for the Mon Sheong Foundation, and a Charter Member of the Toronto Cathay Lions Club, the first Chinese Lions Club in Toronto, Dr. Chong supported the advancement of mutual understanding of diverse cultures and traditions across the City's many communities. In addition, as a founding member of the North York Mayor's Committee on Community and Race Relations and a Citizenship Judge in the Canadian Court of Citizenship, he advocated for equity for all Torontonians and Canadians.

In 2012, in recognition of his significant contributions to public service and community leadership, Dr. Chong was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal by the Office of the Governor General of Canada.

The current temporary park name stems from the street address and can be renamed.

## **Recommended Park**

### *60 Howard Street*

In 2022, a new park was constructed in St. Jamestown located just east of Bloor and Parliament at 60 Howard Street. Parks, Forestry and Recreation identified the park as an option for commemorating Dr. Chong. Dr. Chong's family also confirmed this location as the preferred location to commemorate Dr. Chong. The park is 1,305m<sup>2</sup> in size and contains, among other features, a natural play area, a water play feature and an open lawn with various plantings.

## **Consultations**

In accordance with the City of Toronto Property Naming Policy, City staff consulted with the local Councillor to name 60 Howard Street Park in honour of Dr. Gordon Chong. Between July 16 and August 15, 2020, the local Councillor at the time communicated the proposed naming of the park located at 60 Howard Street to the Ward's residents via regular electronic newsletter and through the City's social media channels. The public was given an opportunity to comment on the proposed naming, and the Councillor endorsed the naming.

Upon Council's lifting of the moratorium on commemorative namings in 2023, the new local Councillor reengaged the community to validate community support. The Councillor conducted a community outreach campaign between April and March 2023 by sharing the proposal with the Ward's residents via the Councillor's regular community engagement channels. This included sharing the proposal in the Councillor's electronic newsletter, posting on social media, and soliciting feedback from the Councillor's community website. The public was invited to comment on the proposed naming, and after the consultations, the Councillor endorsed the naming.

## **City of Toronto Property Naming Policy**

During the consideration of Item EX34.6, A New Commemorative Framework for the City of Toronto's Public Spaces, City Council authorized staff to process naming and renaming applications received prior to October 1, 2020, using the criteria in the City of Toronto Street Naming Policy and the City of Toronto Property Naming Policy adopted by City Council in July 2015 in Item EX7.8 Updated Policies for Naming City Streets and Properties.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation initiated the process for naming a new park through the City of Toronto Naming Policy and consulted with Strategic Partnerships to ensure the naming process met all criteria listed in the 2015 City of Toronto Property Naming Policy. Considering the criteria for the City of Toronto Property Naming Policy has been

met, staff recommend that Council name the park at 60 Howard Street as "Dr. Gordon Chong Park".

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Howie Dayton  
Acting General Manager, Parks, Forestry & Recreation Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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None.