

Naming the New Island and Park in the Port Lands

Date: October 22, 2024

To: Executive Committee

From: Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Wards: Toronto-Danforth - Ward 14

SUMMARY

A supplementary report recommending names for the new island and park in the Port Lands will be submitted to the Executive Committee; this report will respond to [MM5.3 – Place Names in the Port Lands](#) and [EX13.5 - New Island, New Beginnings: Furthering Reconciliation and an Indigenous Cultural Framework for the Port Lands](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, and General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommend that:

1. The Executive Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial implications will be outlined in the forthcoming supplementary report. There are no financial impacts arising from the recommendations in this report.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

On April 18, 2024, City Council directed City staff to recommend a permanent name for the island. City Council's decision is available here:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX13.5>

On March 29, 2023, City Council adopted MM5.3 Place Names in the Port Lands directing City staff to consult with Indigenous communities to name the island, public parks, and streets in the Port Lands. City Council's decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.MM5.3>

In 2022, City Council adopted a renewed vision and priorities for waterfront revitalization with a focus on reconciliation. City Council's decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.EX34.10>

On December 5, 2017, City Council endorsed the Villiers Island Precinct Plan by adopting PG24.6 - Port Lands Planning Initiatives - Final Report. The Precinct Plan provided direction to highlight Indigenous culture by integrating Indigenous history and contemporary activities into its design and by naming public spaces using Indigenous names. City Council's decision and the Precinct Plan are available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2017.PG24.6>

COMMENTS

As the renaturalization of the mouth of the Don River (Port Lands Flood Protection project) approaches its anticipated completion, a new island is emerging in the Port Lands. This island, will be surrounded by 50 acres of unique parkland, greenspace and wetland along the new river valley; this parkland will open to the public in the second half of 2025.

The area was previously referred to by several names through many years of planning and construction, including the Lower Don Lands, the River Precinct, Cousins Quay, and Villiers Island. In November 2024, with the “north plug removal”, a key milestone for the Port Lands Flood Protection project, the Don River will connect with the river valley and complete the transition of the landmass into an island surrounded by water.

City staff have been collaborating with MinoKamik Collective and LURA to engage Elders, Knowledge Keepers, language speakers, and community members to discover, reflect on and recommend Indigenous place names for the island and parkland. An Indigenous Advisory Circle has been convening to discuss the area's history, cultural values, teachings and stories.

A supplementary report will be submitted to Executive Committee to recommend the names put forward by the Indigenous Advisory Circle for the new island and surrounding parkland.

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SIGNATURE

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