

Naming of an existing Public Lane South of Danforth Avenue, extending between West Lynn Avenue and Aldridge Avenue

Date: January 10, 2025

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Engineering Support Services, Engineering and Construction Services
General Manager, Economic Development and Culture

Wards: Ward 19 - Beaches - East York

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the name "Alison McMurray Lane" be approved to identify an existing public lane located south of Danforth Avenue, extending between West Lynn Avenue and Aldridge 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/>

This naming proposal is in alignment with the objectives of the Guiding Principles for Commemoration in the Public Realm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Engineering and Construction Services and the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture recommend that Toronto and East York Community Council:

1. Approve the name "Alison McMurray Lane" for an existing public lane located south of Danforth Avenue, extending between West Lynn Avenue and Aldridge Avenue.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost to install street name signage is approximately \$600 and is included within the Transportation Services Division's Operating Budget.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact section.

DECISION HISTORY

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

COMMENTS

At its meeting on July 19, 2022, City Council adopted the City of Toronto Commemorative Framework and approved revisions to the Street Naming Policy. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.EX34.6>

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

An application was received on July 10, 2022, from a resident requesting to name the existing public lane located south of Danforth Avenue, extending between West Lynn Avenue and Aldridge Avenue, as Alison McMurray Lane, in honour of a local community figure.

The applicant provided the following background and rationale:

“Alison McMurray Lane”

“Alison McMurray does not sit still. When she sees a problem, she jumps in to fix it herself!”

That is how the incredible transformation of East Lynn Park playground took place years ago. Alison was taking her own children there and noticed the equipment was run down and broken, the park was strewn with litter and broken beer bottles, and the green space lacked a fun vibe. So instead of complaining about the situation, Alison grabbed some friends and neighbours and started a group called ELF (East Lynn Foundation). They raised money and worked with city staff to create a new playscape and completely transform the park. Today, East Lynn Park is one of the most vibrant and active parks in the east end with an unbelievable amount of people of all ages and demographics enjoying the sanctuary daily!

After that amazing accomplishment, Alison moved on to help found the remarkable residents' association called DECA (Danforth East Community Association). This gregarious group formed out of camaraderie versus controversy and 10 years later, it is still thriving with endless creative ideas and benevolent members who continually work hard to improve the quality of life in the Woodbine/Danforth area. Arts fairs, historical walks, Pop Up shops, community get-togethers, festive celebrations, music events, you name it - DECA has done it with Alison behind the scenes quietly orchestrating most of

it. She has assumed almost every role in the dedicated organization including being Chair for many years even after she tried to retire.

The cherry on top of the cake is the East Lynn Park Farmers' Market, again something that was co-founded and coordinated each week by Alison McMurray. Food security and support for local, Ontario farmers was top of mind when the market was created. Despite working full-time running several highly successful restaurants, Alison found the time to march around the market each Thursday ensuring customers were happy, farmers were appreciated, musicians were singing out to their heart's content, and children were entertained. DECA decided they needed to feed the people who fed them so they started cooking dinners for all the farmers weekly. In order to stay true to DECA's sustainability beliefs, Alison used to haul clean dishes, cutlery, napkins, and glasses up from her restaurant and lug the dirty ones back home in her wagon every week. WHO DOES THIS?? Salt of the earth Alison McMurray does!

There are so many more examples of Alison's volunteerism where she has literally taken the shirt off her back to the community. She is kind, thoughtful, organized, and dedicated beyond belief. DECA and the east end owe her a huge debt of gratitude and hope to name the laneway near East Lynn Park after her to honour her legacy and activism. The laneway naming will keep the story of Alison McMurray, the instrumental change agent, who put neighbours and strangers first all the time to make the east end a better place live and hopefully, inspire others to pick up her torch!"

Historical Research on Alison McMurray

Alison McMurray is an active and respected member of the East Danforth community, recognized for her significant contributions and commitment to local initiatives. Her work has been instrumental in fostering inclusivity and community engagement in the area.

Alison McMurray founded the East Lynn Foundation (ELF) and led a successful fundraising campaign to revitalize the playground at the East Lynn Park in collaboration with the City of Toronto. Upon the completion of the East Lynn Park project, she helped found the Danforth East Community Association (DECA). Alison McMurray played a key role in organizing numerous events through DECA, including art fairs, historical walks, pop-up shows, community gatherings, festive celebrations, and music events. With Alison McMurray's involvement, DECA founded and coordinated the East Lynn Park Farmer's Market. This market focuses on bringing locally grown food to the community.

Naming a laneway after Alison McMurray would honor her impactful community-building work in the East Danforth area.

A complete historical research report is available upon request.

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

Councillor Brad Bradford, Ward 19 Beaches-East York, supports this naming.

Consent was provided by Alison McMurray, the commemorated party.

Community support was demonstrated with a petition of signatures from the local community.

The lane is shown as PART 1 on Attachment No.1 Sketch No. **PS-2024-026**.

CONTACT

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Patrick Tobin, General Manager
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 Sketch No. **PS-2024-026**

Attachment No. 1 Sketch No. PS-2024-026, showing the location of an existing public lane located south of Danforth Avenue, extending between West Lynn Avenue and Aldridge Avenue.

