

Naming of an existing Public Lane West of Symington Avenue, extending Northerly from Kingsley Avenue

Date: May 16, 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 9 - Davenport

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the name "Chic and Min Johnston Lane" be approved to identify an existing public lane located west of Symington Avenue, extending northerly from Kingsley 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

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

1. Approve the name "Chic and Min Johnston Lane" for an existing public lane located west of Symington Avenue, extending northerly from Kingsley Avenue.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost to install street name signage is approximately \$600 and is included within the Transportation Services Division's 2025 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 24, 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.

A complete application was received on July 24, 2023, from a resident requesting to name the existing public lane located west of Symington Avenue, extending northerly from Kingsley Avenue, as Chic and Min Johnston Lane, in honour of local community figures.

The applicant provided the following background and rationale:

“Chic and Min Johnston Lane”

“Chic & Min Johnston were very instrumental in being looked up to for advice, as well as respected “leaders” in the community, the many years they lived at 505 Perth Ave. Both my parents were born and raised in Toronto. Dad was Toronto’s first black School Trustee. Mom was a teacher’s assistant at Davenport Public School. They always were helping out and offering advice to their fellow community members...especially new immigrants in our community who needed help with problems that would arise. As mentioned, my Dad was Toronto’s first black School Trustee, which made the black community of Toronto very proud. Both my parents fought for the rights all “equity-deserving groups” of people in their community and beyond.”

Historical Research on the Chic and Min Johnston

Chic Johnston (1923–2005) and Carrie Minnie “Min” Johnston (née Wright, 1922–2002) were esteemed members of Toronto’s Davenport community. The applicants are seeking to honour their enduring legacy of social justice, education, and public service through the commemorative naming of a local laneway.

The couple married in 1947. Chic Johnston was a World War II veteran who served with the Royal Canadian Air Force as a reconnaissance spotter in Europe. Upon returning to civilian life, he worked as a tool and die maker at the renowned Grey Tools Factory. He

became actively involved in confronting racial discrimination, notably participating in the 1942 protest at the Palais Royale against the exclusion of racialized individuals. In 1970, he made history by becoming Toronto's first Black School Trustee, representing Ward 3 until 1976.

Minnie "Min" Johnston was equally dedicated to her community. She served as a teacher's aide at Davenport Public School and later as a cafeteria manager at Osler Senior School. Her volunteer work at the Davenport United Church further reflected her commitment to community engagement.

The Johnstons were widely respected in their neighbourhood, affectionately known as Perth Avenue's "block parents," as neighbours often turned to the couple for guidance and support. Their collective contributions exemplify a lifelong dedication to equity, education, and the betterment of their community. Naming a laneway in their honour will serve as a meaningful tribute to their legacy of community-centred work.

A complete Historical Research Report is available upon request.

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

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

Consent was provided by Ron Johnston, the commemorated parties' son.

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-2025-027**.

CONTACT

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Patrick Tobin, General Manager, Economic Development & Culture

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 Sketch No. **PS-2025-027**

Attachment 1 Sketch No. PS-2025-027, showing the location of a public lane located west of Symington Avenue, extending northerly from Kingsley Avenue.

