

Naming of a Proposed Public Street for a Development at 215 Lake Shore Boulevard East

Date: January 30, 2026

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Ward 10 - Spadina - Fort York

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the name "Chloe Cooley Street" be approved to identify a proposed public street located at 215 Lakeshore Boulevard.

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

1. Approve the name "Chloe Cooley Street" for a proposed public street located at 215 Lakeshore Boulevard

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost to install street name signage is approximately \$600.00 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.

A complete application was finalized on December 15, 2025, from a developer requesting to name a proposed public street located 215 Lakeshore Boulevard, as Chloe Cooley Street honouring Chloe Cooley's historical significance as a catalyst for anti-slavery legislation in Upper Canada.

The following background and rationale provided by the applicant:

Chloe Cooley Street

This name has been endorsed by the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee and Executive Committee:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX12.8>

Chloe Cooley was designated a person of national historic significance in 2022

<https://parks.canada.ca/culture/designation/personnage-person/chloe-cooley>

Chloe Cooley's act of resistance to enslavement led to testimony that emboldened Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe to pass legislation limiting enslavement, making Upper Canada a refuge for African Americans seeking freedom. This was a significant historic development for Canada, Ontario, and Toronto.

Chloe Cooley's act of resistance took place at the Niagara River near Queenston, relating to the waterfront location of this new street.

The proposed name is significant to Black communities.

Chloe Cooley Historical Research

An application has been submitted to name a new street between Richardson Street and Lower Sherbourne Street, north of Queens Quay East in the East Waterfront Community, in honour of Chloe Cooley. The application contains a statement of Chloe Cooley's historical significance and evidence of community support for the proposed name.

Chloe Cooley's story of resistance against slavery represents a pivotal moment in Canadian history. Her forced removal from Upper Canada in 1793 sparked public outcry and led to the first legislation in a British colony restricting slavery. Today, Cooley's name is recognized as an important part of efforts to commemorate Black history and confront anti-Black racism, reflecting her enduring legacy in shaping principles of freedom and justice.

In March 1793, Chloe Cooley, an enslaved Black woman living in Queenston, Upper Canada, was forcibly loaded onto a boat by William Vrooman, her enslaver, and taken across the Niagara River to be sold in Upper New York state. Cooley resisted during the forced removal, drawing the attention of two witnesses, Peter Martin, a free Black man, and William Grisley, a white labourer. The two men reported the incident to John Graves Simcoe, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada (present-day Ontario) from 1791 to 1796. There is record of Grisley's testimony before the Executive Council of the Upper Canadian legislature. Afterwards, Simcoe instructed Attorney-General, John White, to prosecute Vrooman for disrupting the peace. At the time, enslaved people had no legal rights, leaving no grounds for prosecution.

Chloe Cooley's appearance in the historical record marks a definitive turning point in the history of enslaved Black people in Canada. Historian Afua Cooper suggests that Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe brought abolitionist values to the office when he was appointed in 1791. The forceful removal of Chloe Cooley provided an appropriate opportunity to enact legislation against slavery.

Historian Natasha Henry-Dixon explains that two months after William Grisley's testified against Vrooman, Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe and Attorney General John White introduced an abolition bill to the House of Assembly on June 19, 1793. This bill faced strong opposition from members who were enslavers. The bill was debated, and a compromise resulted in legislation restricting slavery in Upper Canada.

On July 9, 1793, "An Act to Prevent the Further Introduction of Slaves and to Limit the Terms of Contracts for Servitude Within this Province" became law. It prohibited bringing enslaved peoples into the province but allowed the continued buying and selling of those already enslaved in the province. Existing enslaved persons remained enslaved for life; their children were freed at age 25, and subsequent generations were born free.

Chloe Cooley's resistance prompted the first legislation in a British colony to restrict the slave trade. Slavery within the British empire ended on August 1, 1834, with the "Slavery Abolition Act."

In 2024, the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee included Chloe Cooley's name in a list for inclusion in a name bank for consideration as commemorative names for City of Toronto assets ([2024.EX12.8](#)), reflecting her significance in Black Canadian History.

Chloe Cooley's legacy as a catalyst for anti-slavery legislation in Upper Canada has been recognized through Council's direction to include her name in Toronto's

commemorative name bank. This recommendation reflects community support, demonstrated by two letters and a petition endorsing the naming of a new street near Lower Sherbourne Street and Queens Quay East as Chloe Cooley Street. Her story continues to hold significance as part of efforts to honour Black history and confront anti-Black racism in the city

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 Ausma Malik, Ward 10 - Spadina - Fort York, supports this naming.

Section 3.12 of the Street Naming Policy states in part that written consent of the named party or their representative is required. Section 3.12.1 provides that a name proposal may still go forth, notwithstanding the lack of consent, if the City is satisfied with the written account of the efforts undertaken to achieve support.

3.12 Naming or renaming a Street, or assigning a Ceremonial Name to a Street, on behalf of an individual, event, or an organization requires the written consent of the named party or the named party's representative.

3.12.1 In circumstances where consent has not been received, the City, in the absence of any refusal to provide consent or legal concerns, may approve the name if it is satisfied that reasonable efforts have been made to obtain consent.

Deputy Mayor Malik consulted with historian Rochelle Bush, an expert on Canada's Black history to confirm that despite extensive research over several years, no descendants have been found. This name proposal will proceed under Section 3.12.1

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

A letter of support from the Waterfront BIA was received on December 15, 2025.

The street is shown as PART 1 on Attachment No.1 Sketch No. PS-2025-047.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

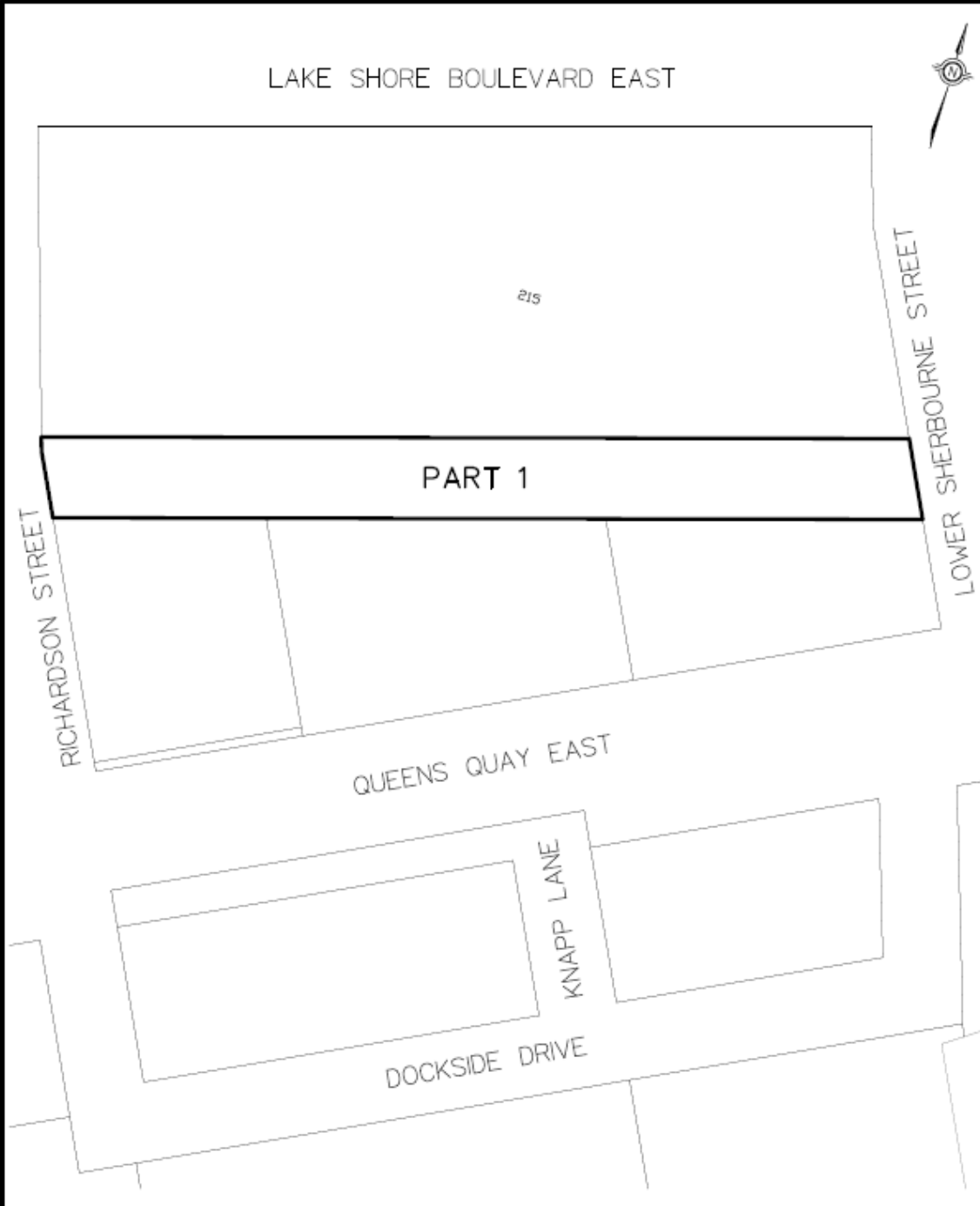
Avi Bachar, P. Eng., Director, Engineering Support Services, Engineering and Construction Services

Patrick Tobin, General Manager, Economic Development & Culture

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 Sketch No. PS-2025-047

Attachment No. 1 Sketch No. PS-2025-047, showing the location of a proposed public street for a Development at 215 Lake Shore Boulevard East

	
<p>Toronto PROPERTY & CONSTRUCTION SERVICES ENGINEERING & SURVEYING LAND & PROPERTY SERVICES</p> <p>NOTE: THIS SKETCH HAS BEEN COMPILED FROM OFFICE RECORDS. MEASUREMENTS ARE APPROXIMATE</p> <p>CHECKED BY: J. SEGUN PREPARED BY: S. LOMBARDI</p>	<p>PROPERTY INFORMATION SHEET</p> <p>NAMING OF A PROPOSED PUBLIC STREET FOR A DEVELOPMENT AT 215 LAKE SHORE BOULEVARD EAST</p> <p>WARD 10 - SPADINA-FORT YORK DATE: JANUARY 15, 2026</p> <p>SKETCH No. PS-2025-047</p>