

Naming of an existing Public Lane located north of Eastern Avenue, between Berkshire Avenue and Rushbrooke Avenue

Date: June 10, 2026

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Ward 14 - Toronto - Danforth

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the name "Valerie Mah Lane" be approved to identify an existing public lane located north of Eastern Avenue, between Berkshire Avenue and Rushbrooke 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 [Guiding Principles](#) for Commemoration in the Public Realm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 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 "Valerie Mah Lane" for an existing public lane located north of Eastern Avenue, between Berkshire Avenue and Rushbrooke Avenue.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost to install street name signage is approximately \$600.00 and is included within the Transportation Services Division's approved 2026 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

At its meeting on May 28, 2026, Toronto and East York Community Council adopted item TE33.75 directing the Director, Engineering Support Services, Engineering and Construction Services and the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to report to the July 8 and 9, 2026 meeting of the Toronto and East York Community Council with recommendations to name the existing public lane located north of Eastern Avenue, between Berkshire Avenue and Rushbrooke Avenue as "Valerie Mah Lane".

[Agenda Item History - 2026.TE33.75](#)

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.

This report responds to item TE33.75 and the application received on May 28th, 2026, requesting to name the existing public lane located north of Eastern Avenue, between Berkshire Avenue and Rushbrooke Avenue, as "Valerie Mah Lane" honouring the first Chinese Vice-principal at the Toronto Board of Education and then long-time Principal at Bruce Public School.

The following background and rationale was provided by the applicant:

Valerie Mah Lane

Valerie Mah was the first Chinese vice-principal at the Toronto Board of Education and then the long-time principal at Bruce Public School. She was so very dedicated to her students and their families that she developed a full kitchen, as she strongly believed children needed a full stomach to be good learners.

She was a longtime member of TEOF (Toronto Education Opportunity Fund) and, for many years, raised funds for student nutrition in Toronto schools at her annual Lunar New Year banquet.

When the newly amalgamated Toronto District School Board decided to close Bruce School, Principal Mah worked with well known early-years advocates Fraser Mustard and Charles Pascal and her community to propose instead a full day integrated learning program at Bruce School. This became the model for full-day kindergarten in Ontario.

Valerie Mah also served with distinction on the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of East Toronto as a key organizer for the Chinese Archway at Gerrard and Broadview and was a longtime member of the Division 55 Toronto Police Service's Community Police Liaison Committee (CPLC), which established a youth bursary in her name.

With strong support from Mah's family, local community groups, and education workers I support this opportunity to honour Valerie.

Valerie Mah Lane Research & Review

The Economic Development and Culture Division (EDC) has reviewed the application to name the unnamed laneway west of Rushbrooke Avenue, north of Eastern Avenue, in the Leslieville neighbourhood in commemoration of Valerie Mah (née Lor) (1938-2021). The proposed name is "Valerie Mah Lane." The application is accompanied by a motion requesting the naming of a laneway after Valerie Mah (2026.TE33.75). The following summarizes EDC's research and review of the proposed name, undertaken in accordance with the City's Guiding Principles for Commemoration.

As outlined by the applicant and verified through staff research, Valerie Mah was a distinguished educator, community leader and a prominent figure within the Chinese Canadian community. During her career with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), Mah demonstrated leadership and commitment to public education. Mah was the TDSB's first woman Asian Vice-principal, a role she held at Withrow Avenue Junior Public School. She later served as Principal of Bruce Public School until her retirement. During her tenure, Mah collaborated with the WoodGreen Foundation and Atkinson Foundation to develop a full-day kindergarten model that was adopted across Ontario. Mah championed the importance of childhood nutrition and organized annual fundraisers to ensure schools across Toronto offered hot breakfasts to students.

Valerie Mah's commitment to the community is demonstrated by her extensive service to organizations that support the education field, the Chinese community, as well as her neighbourhood. Her board and committee service included the Toronto Educational Opportunity Fund (TEOF), Retired Teachers of Ontario (RTO), Mon Sheong Foundation, the Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care, West Park Healthcare Centre Foundation, Jean Lumb Foundation, and the Community/Police Liaison Committee for 55 Division. In 2009, Mah worked with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of East Toronto and Councillor Fletcher (then representing Ward 30, Toronto-Danforth) to have the first traditional Chinese archway erected in Toronto's Chinatown East. The archway is located just west of Broadview Avenue and Gerrard Street East. As a reflection of

Mah's contributions, both the Jean Lumb Foundation and the Community/Police Liaison Committee for 55 Division created scholarships for youth in her honour.

Mah's contributions earned her recognition and awards. In 2012, she was the recipient of the Governor General's Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. In 2014, Mah was awarded the City of Toronto's Constance E. Hamilton Award for her ongoing community engagement. Her advocacy included initiatives to ensure food security for students, establishing the annual Lunar New Year Banquet through TEOF, creating a model for Ontario's full-day kindergarten in partnership with the WoodGreen Foundation and Atkinson Foundation, and working with Dr. Joseph Wong to co-found the Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care ensuring that Chinese seniors could receive culturally appropriate care.

The application includes documentation of strong community support for the proposed name. An online petition garnered signatures in support of the name from across Canada and the United States. There are additional signatures from the community immediately surrounding the laneway. Councillor Fletcher has written a letter of support for the proposed name.

In summary, as outlined in the application and confirmed by staff research, Valerie Mah was an active participant in Toronto's education and Chinese Canadian communities. Mah's contributions reflect a long-term commitment to social justice, equity, and educational excellence.

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.

Valerie Mah passed away on February 7th, 2021.

Consent was provided by Ian Mah, son of the late Valerie Mah.

Councillor Paula Fletcher, Ward 14 Toronto-Danforth, supports this naming.

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

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

The lane is shown as PART 1 on Attachment No.1 Sketch No. PS-2026-022.

CONTACT

Tony Rodrigues, Manager, Land and Property Surveys, Engineering Support Services, Engineering and Construction Services, Telephone: 416 396-7140, Email: Tony.F.Rodrigues@toronto.ca

Shiralee Hudson Hill, Director (Acting), Museums and Heritage Services, Economic Development & Culture, Telephone: 416-396-4802, Email: Shiralee.HudsonHill@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

Patrick Tobin, General Manager, Economic Development & Culture

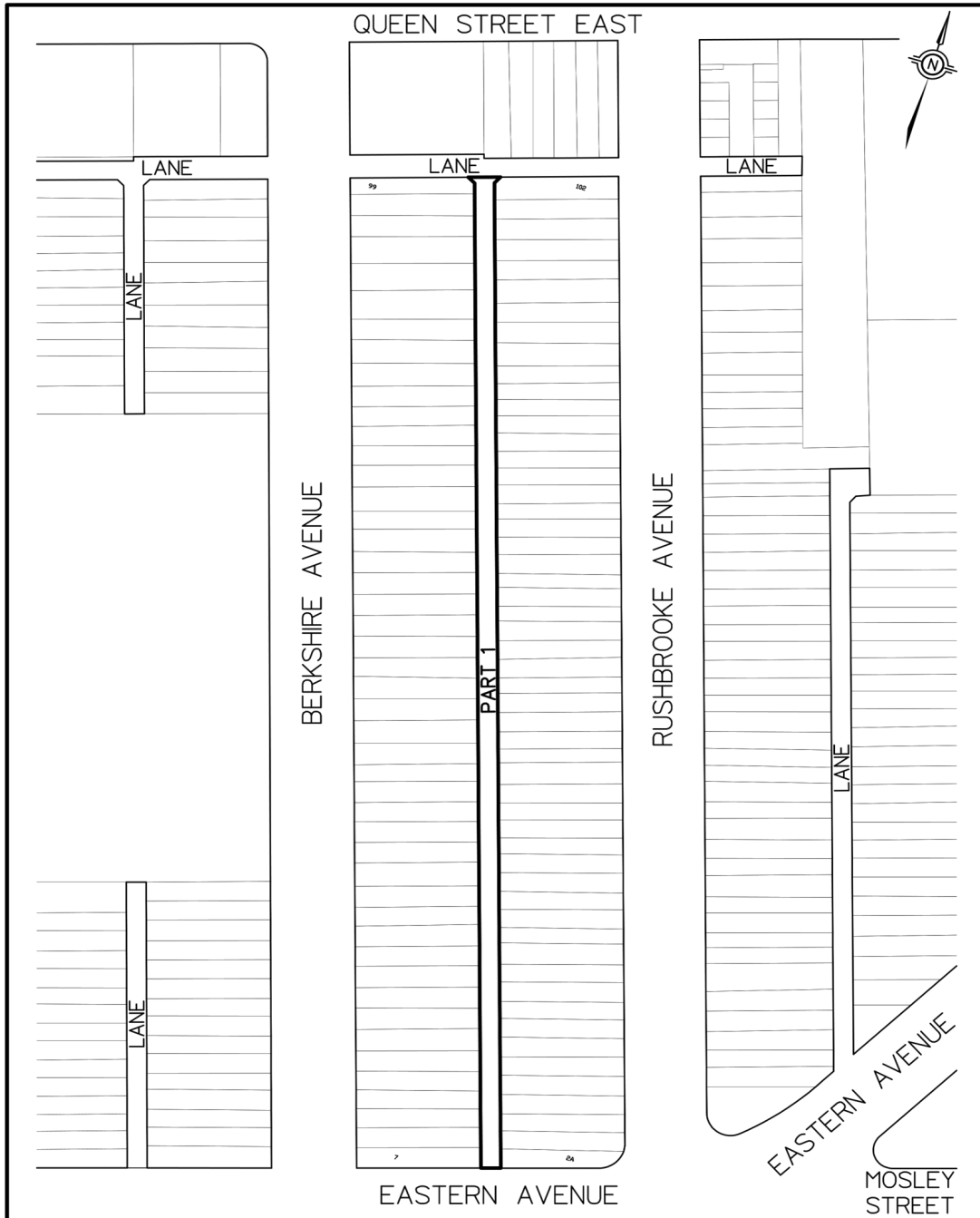
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Sketch No. PS-2026-022

Attachment 2 – Letter of Support from Councillor Paula Fletcher

Attachment 1

Sketch No. PS-2026-022, showing the location of an existing public lane located north of Eastern Avenue, between Berkshire Avenue and Rushbrooke Avenue.



<p>Toronto ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION SERVICES ENGINEERING SUPPORT SERVICES LAND & PROPERTY SURVEYS</p>	<p>PROPERTY INFORMATION SHEET</p> <p>NAMING OF A PUBLIC LANE LOCATED NORTH OF EASTERN AVENUE, BETWEEN BERKSHIRE AVENUE AND RUSHBROOKE AVENUE</p>	
	<p>NOTE: THIS SKETCH HAS BEEN COMPILED FROM OFFICE RECORDS. MEASUREMENTS ARE APPROXIMATE</p>	<p>WARD 14 - TORONTO-DANFORTH DATE: JUNE 3, 2026</p>
<p>CHECKED BY: R. SEGUIN PREPARED BY: S. LOMBARDO</p>		

Attachment 2

Letter of Support from Councillor Paula Fletcher, Toronto City Councillor for Ward 14, Toronto- Danforth



方卓怡 市議員 **Paula Fletcher**

City Councillor | Ward 14 Toronto-Danforth

May 26, 2026

Toronto and East York Community Council
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Report request on naming an existing lane Valerie Mah Lane

Dear Councillor Moise and Toronto and East York Community Council,

Valerie Mah was the first Chinese vice-principal at the Toronto Board of Education and then the long-time principal at Bruce Public School. She was so very dedicated to her students and their families that she developed a full kitchen, as she strongly believed children needed a full stomach to be good learners.

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Valerie Mah also served with distinction on the Chinese Chamber of Commerce East Toronto as a key organizer for the Chinese Archway at Gerrard and Broadview and was a longtime member of the Division 55 Toronto Police Service's Community Police Liaison Committee (CPLC), which established a youth bursary in her name.

With strong support from Mah's family, local community groups, and education workers I support this opportunity to honour Valerie.

Recommendation:

Toronto and East York Community Council direct the Director, Engineering Support Services, Engineering and Construction Services and the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to report to the July 8 and 9, 2026 meeting of the Toronto and East York Community Council with recommendations to name the existing public



City Hall, 100 Queen St. West, Suite C44, Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Telephone: (416) 392-4060 Fax: (416) 392-5200 email: councillor_fletcher@toronto.ca