

Report to Civic Works Committee

To: Chair and Members
Civic Works Committee

From: George Kotsifas, P.Eng.
Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development

Subject: Commemorative Naming of City Assets
Terms of Reference

Date: November 23, 2021

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development, the following actions be taken to request feedback from the public and to incorporate an equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression framework when naming or renaming City assets:

- a) the proposed Terms of Reference (Appendix 'A') for reviewing the City's commemorative naming process(es) **BE APPROVED**; and,
- b) any further requests to change the names of facilities, parks, streets or other City assets **BE DEFERRED** until a public engagement process is complete, a tool for selecting names has been developed and administrative process(es) have been updated.

IT BEING NOTED that funding for physical changes to signage or other re-naming costs must be considered as part of the Multi-Year Budget process through business case submissions, pending Council approval of the new policies and procedures.

Executive Summary

The attached Terms of Reference (ToR) will guide the research and public consultation to gather input into the process that will be used to update the City's commemorative naming policies and processes.

As part of this work, the goals will be to:

- Modernize the process(es).
- Consider and incorporate best practices from around Ontario and other jurisdictions.
- Consider and identify what factors should be considered when selecting a name, i.e., contribution to London, equity, historical, etc.
- Work co-operatively with other agencies and stakeholders engaged in the naming process (e.g., Municipal Addressing Advisory Group, London Black History Coordinating Committee, etc.).

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

In 2020, Municipal Council strengthened its commitment to eliminating systemic racism and oppression by establishing Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression as a sixth priority of Council and approving the creation of a Division focused on Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression.

In addition, this is linked to Leading in Public Service:

The City of London is trusted, open, and accountable in service of our community.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC)

The OHRC has recently started a consultation to develop a policy for the discriminatory display of names, words and images.

The consultation specifically looks at the impact of colonialism, promoting education and legal obligations, as well as establishing a framework for dealing with issues. The consultation even encourages municipalities to undertake their own public consultation with residents and stakeholders.

Council Direction in September 2020

In September 2020, Council endorsed the following motion:

That the following actions be taken with respect to street renaming:

- a) the petition dated September 1, 2020 submitted by London resident Lyla Wheeler, regarding the renaming of “Plantation Road” BE RECEIVED; it being noted that the petition is available for viewing in the City Clerk’s Office;
- b) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to undertake a review of City’s By-laws, Policies and Guidelines relating to street naming processes and approvals and report back on any recommended changes to the process(es) that would support and implement the City’s commitment to eradicate anti-Black, anti-Indigenous and people of colour oppression; it being noted that the report back is to include a review of the request set out in the petition noted in a) above, recognizing Historically, the word “Plantation” has a strong correlation to slavery, oppression and racism;
- c) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to expand the established Municipal Addressing Advisory Group (M.A.A.G.) to include the City’s Diversity and Inclusion Specialist; and,
- d) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to establish a list of potential street names that are reflective of suggestions from the community reflecting the contribution London’s Historic Black Families (including those names provided for by the London Black History Coordinating Committee), Indigenous communities and people of colour; it being noted, the following letter of support pertaining to this motion BE RECEIVED:
 - African Canadian Federation of London and Area (ACFOLA)

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

In support of Council’s 6th strategic priority, the City also has many policies related to promoting diversity, anti-racism and anti-oppression. This includes:

- Race relations / Anti-Racism Policy
- Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Diversity, Race Relations and Inclusivity Award Policy
- Gender Equity in Recreation Services

Consistent with these policies and with Council’s direction in September 2020, the purpose of this work is to take steps that continue to build a London that is welcoming and safe for all people.

Through this direction from Council, staff will review all existing commemorative naming policies.

2.1 Moratorium on Decisions Related to Renaming or Naming Applications

To reduce confusion and ensure a consistent approach, staff are proposing a pause on accepting any new applications for commemoration until the engagement process is completed and recommendations come to Council in Spring 2023.

The City's website will be updated to inform the community about the pause on applications and new information, including the Terms of Reference and this report, will be shared. As the details of the engagement process are finalized, a Get Involved site will be established.

2.2 Current Commemorative Naming Policies

The City currently has multiple policies to recognize individual contributions to London.

These include:

- Commemorative Street Naming.
- Streets of Honour.
- Naming/Re-naming or Dedicating of Municipal Property.
- Buildings and Park Elements Policy.
- Naming of Highways and Numbering of Buildings & Lots.

These policies will be reviewed and revised as part of this process.

2.3 Preliminary Municipal Scan – Street Naming Process

A survey of 5 municipalities (Windsor, Kingston, Mississauga, Niagara Falls and Ottawa) was carried out to compare their street naming regulations and practices to the City of London's.

The following is a summary of findings:

- Most of the municipalities delegated staff or a committee composed of staff as the approval authority for the creation of street names.
- All municipalities allow for developers to propose new street names. London allows for developers to bank multiple names for their current and any future developments while most other municipalities bank the names, but they can be used by any developer for any future development.
- All municipalities have a list of pre-approved street names that are vetted either formally through a committee, or informally directly to emergency services, staff and other stakeholders.
- All municipalities include some sort of public process to make a final approval depending on the scope of the change.

Generally, based on this scoped review, London's current practices are consistent with the other municipalities surveyed in Ontario. When updating the process, although not an exhaustive list, staff will consider the following items:

- Authority for approval.
- Review committee, for example, Municipal Addressing Advisory Group (MAAG) and/or Commemorative Naming Committee.
- Compensation to affected property owners.
- Pre-approved lists for public and private streets.
- Amount of public input, including the number of affected residents.

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

Existing operating budgets will fund surveys, communication materials, public engagement and other project related costs. Approval for the components of this work will be in accordance with the City's Procurement of Goods and Services Policy.

Pending the outcome of the review, additional costs may be incurred for future phases of this work. These will be submitted for consideration through the 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget process, as necessary.

4.0 Key Issues and Considerations

Terms of Reference to Guide Public Consultation

The goal of this consultation is not to make recommendations on existing names. Rather, it is to define a process that allows us to review current and future names through a critical anti-racism and anti-oppression lens. Public engagement will play a key role in this process.

The attached Terms of Reference (Appendix 'A') will guide the public engagement process and, ultimately, the process to update City policies that address commemorative naming.

The schedule for implementation is included below, with the full ToR provided as Appendix 'A'.

Early 2022:

1. Launch a public engagement program to gather input from Londoners on this topic.

December 2022:

2. Progress report to Civic Works summarizing feedback provided through the public engagement process.

Spring 2023:

3. Develop an approach for commemorative naming of City facilities and assets.
 - Assess and make recommendations on how the tool or lens can be incorporated into all commemorative naming policies.
4. Apply the tool to existing and proposed city street and facility names.
5. Develop a list of proposed names for streets and facilities that are reflective of community input.
6. Provide recommendations to Council to address existing street names.
7. Lift the moratorium and update processes.

Summer 2023 (based on Council direction):

8. Develop draft Business Case for inclusion into 2024 Multi-Year Budget.

Summer 2024 (based on Council direction):

9. Following Multi-Year Budget approval, work commences on making physical changes.

Main Considerations When Developing New Policies for Naming and Re-Naming

1. Similar to other municipalities, London's current guidelines determine the appropriateness of street names based on operational issues. For example, do street names sound alike, is there repetition, continuity, etc. This is done to avoid confusion for emergency services and home delivery services.
2. Establishing the historical significance of a particular name and understanding why it was chosen at the time, along with how the name affects the current social norms and cultural perspectives.

3. Establishing policies that introduce new ways to approach naming that celebrate cultural and individual diversity through education and recognition.

Conclusion

Decisions on the commemorative naming of City assets will be deferred until a public engagement process has been undertaken. The process seeks to gain input from Londoners on how to best recognize historical context, contribution to London and consistency with Council's goal to end racism and oppression.

The outputs of the consultation will include a new equity and diversity framework along with changes to the existing policies and procedures that recognize best practices from around Ontario and Canada.

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Submitted by: **Gregg Barrett, AICP**
Director, Planning and Development

Recommended by: **George Kotsifas, P.Eng.**
Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development

Cc: SLT,
Rumina Morris, Director, Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism,
Jeff Shaughnessy, Specialist, Municipal Policy,
Rosanna Wilcox, Director, Strategy and Innovation

Update to the City of London's Commemorative Naming Policies Terms of Reference

Purpose:

To carry out research, conduct public consultation, prepare reports and recommendations for London City Council to consider regarding commemorative naming of City assets and facilities in a way that reflects the City's commitment to eradicating racism and oppression.

- [Civic Works Committee, September 22nd, 2020, Agenda Item #4.1](#)

Commemorative Naming Governance:

- Council to adopt any policy changes required to recognize the equity and historical perspectives of the public.
- The process shall be led by staff in Planning and Economic Development with guidance and input provided by the Director, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression.
 - Senior Leadership Team shall review and approve outputs prior to seeking direction from Council.
 - An Internal Stakeholder group shall be developed and will include areas affected by the potential changes, i.e., Cultural Services, Facilities, Transportation, Parks, Communications, etc.
 - External Stakeholder group(s) shall be developed to provide input and guidance on equity issues, historical perspectives or other issues identified through the public consultation.

Principles to Guide the Process:

- Modernize the process(es).
- Incorporate best practices from around Ontario, or other jurisdictions are considered.
- Consider and identify what factors should be considered when selecting a name, i.e., contribution to London, equity, historical, etc.
- Work co-operatively with other agencies and stakeholders engaged in the naming process (e.g., MAAG, London Black History Coordinating Committee, etc.).

Public Input:

- Collect input from the broader public using methods that include traditional surveys, stakeholder interviews and at-large input.
- Use a mix of different methods including phone, social media and in-person interviews with key stakeholder groups and Londoners.
- Include local historians and archeologists to help frame why a name may / may not be chosen.
- In all cases, the process will focus on promoting fairness and equity of the public input, such that all input is welcome.

Outputs of the Consultation:

- A new equity and diversity framework that will be included in all naming and re-naming policies.
- Updates to the naming and re-naming policies and procedures that recognize best practices from around Ontario and Canada.

Focus of Review and Deliverables:

Initiated in early 2022

1. A public engagement program to garner input from Londoners on this topic.

Delivered in December 2022:

2. Progress report to Civic Works following public engagement process.

Delivered in Spring 2023:

3. Develop an approach for commemorative naming of City facilities and assets.
 - Assess and make recommendations on how the tool or lens can be incorporated into all commemorative naming policies.
4. Apply the tool to existing and proposed city street and facility names.
5. Develop a list of proposed names for streets and facilities that are reflective of the suggestions from the community.
6. Council to decide on approach for renaming of existing streets.
7. Lift the moratorium and update processes.

Delivered in Summer 2023 (based on Council direction):

8. Develop draft Business Case for inclusion into 2024 Multi-Year Budget.

Delivered in Summer 2024 (based on Council direction):

9. Following Multi-Year Budget approval, work commences on making physical changes.

Policies, procedures, documents, etc. to be Considered:

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 10 principles.
- National Council of Canadian Muslims, Municipal Recommendations.
- Others identified through the public engagement.

Out-of-Scope:

- Adjustments to administrative processes not related to naming and renaming, or any organizational structure(s).
- Fees for name changes. These will be based on cost-recovery and addressed through comprehensive fees review project.
- Business case development for the cost of new staff, signage, etc.
 - These will be submitted by the area responsible for the delivery of the service. For example, Environment and Infrastructure would take the lead on submitting cases for the potential costs of new street signs based on the decision from Council in 2023.