



POLICY

Recreation & Culture

Policy #: 1000.7

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Naming and Renaming of City Property

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline a procedure for the commemorative naming or renaming of City property including buildings, parks/open spaces, and component features and amenities as part of the acquisition and/or management of these spaces by the City of Niagara Falls.

Objective

- 1 To provide a consistent process for the City of Niagara Falls to recognize significant local events, people and geographic features through the naming of City property;
- 2 To provide guidelines by which names will be chosen for new City property, and by which they will be renamed, if necessary;
- 3 To include community involvement in the naming/renaming, and dedication of City property, and features through a clearly defined process.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are provided for greater clarity.

City Property – Buildings, parks, open spaces, and features or amenities.

Component Feature or Amenity – all substantial structures or recreational aspects of a park or greenspace which includes, but is not limited to, such things as sport fields, ball diamonds, trails, hard surface courts, tennis courts, lawn bowling greens, bocce courts, gardens, playgrounds, washrooms and skateboard park facilities, etc.

Commemorative Naming - naming rights granted to honour outstanding achievement, distinctive service, or significant community contribution. Commemorative naming will not be tied to a financial contribution.

Individual and Community Organization Commemorative Naming – naming rights granted to an individual, group of individuals, family foundation, or a non-profit community organization in recognition of significant philanthropy.

Building – includes any City owned and operated building.

Open Space – includes, but not limited to, trails, pathway systems, utility features such as storm-water management ponds, and other like structure under the jurisdiction of the City of Niagara Falls.

Parkland – means all parkland designations including, but not limited to, dedicated parkland, city-wide parks, community parks, neighbourhood parks, parkettes, open space, etc. owned by and/or under the jurisdiction of the City of Niagara Falls.

Significant Financial Gifts – means a monetary donation reflective of the total capital cost or appraised value of the amenity being considered for naming.

Criteria

1.0 Commemorative Name Designation Associated with Functional Use, Geographic Location or Historical Significance.

1.1 Generally, chosen names shall reflect the adjacent street name. For example, Ontario park – majority of street frontage on Ontario Avenue. This is to ensure continuity and minimize conflicts for emergency services. Staff may assign a name based on the adjacent street, functional use, geographic feature, community name or historic significance. Examples include:

Alpine Park	- adjacent to Alpine Drive
Lundy's Lane Battlefield	- Historical Significance

1.2 Chosen names within this designation shall be assigned by Staff and may remain unchanged until a formal request for a name change has been approved by Council.

1.3 The chosen name shall not conflict with similar names, in whole or in part. For example, if a park is named Oakes Park, no other similar name shall be used, such as Red Oak Park.

2.0 Commemorative Name Designation Associated in Honour of Individuals or Groups.

2.1 This section applies to any request to naming or renaming of City property in honour of individuals or groups.

2.2 Council shall approve all names in honour of individuals or groups. All requests for naming, designating or renaming in honour of individuals or groups shall be submitted in writing, with supporting explanation and/or justification to the Chair of the Recreation Committee, c/o the Director of Recreation & Culture. Staff will forward a report with the Committee's recommendations to Council for consideration.

2.3 Names for consideration shall be those of distinguished persons, organizations, corporations, foundations or families:

- a. where there has been significant contribution to the quality of life, well-being of the City of Niagara Falls; or

- b. Where the person/group is perceived as a role model and open to close scrutiny relative to their character, integrity and values; or
 - c. demonstrated excellence, courage or exceptional service to the citizens of the City of Niagara Falls; or
 - d. to memorialize or otherwise recognize substantial gifts and significant donors, individuals designated by donors, or individuals who have made exemplary or meritorious contributions to the City of Niagara Falls; or,
 - e. where there is a strong historical or cultural connection to the City and has a major contribution to the historical or cultural preservation of the City; or,
 - f. where there is a strong contribution toward environmental preservation, conservation or enhancement of the City; or
 - g. where there is a major contribution made to the acquisition, development or conveyance of land or building in question and/or its subsequent development; or
 - h. where there is a direct relationship or association that exists between the place or former place of residence of the person or group and the facility/park to be named.
- 2.4 Naming in honour of elected or appointed public officials, City officials, or Staff shall normally occur only after the public service or City employment has concluded.
- 2.5 Notwithstanding the above, Council, by resolution, may approve a name or name change in honour of individuals or groups when circumstances justify such an action. Council may also remove the original name designation when circumstances justify such action.

3.0 Commemorative Names of Provincial, National or International Significance

- 3.1 Council may approve a name or name change in honour of individuals or groups who have made an outstanding contribution provincially, nationally, or internationally.
- 3.2 In such instances, and prior to approving the use of any name of individuals or group, Staff shall investigate any protocol and/or requirements of any provincial, national or international agency or organization.

4.0 Names Derived from Significant Financial Contributions

- 4.1 In select instances where a naming request has been proposed as a result of receiving a unique and extraordinary financial, or other significant contribution, towards the acquisition, creation or redevelopment of a City property consideration will be given to the sponsorship contribution being provided. The merits and value of each such name will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. It should not be assumed that a financial contribution guarantees that a park is named after the service club/business/individual /organization.

5.0 Renaming Existing Parks

- 5.1 Renaming of parks and open spaces carries with it a much greater burden of process compared to initial naming. Tradition and continuity of name and community identification are important community values. Each application must meet the criteria in this policy, but meeting all criteria does not automatically ensure renaming.
- 5.2 Critical examination will be conducted to ensure that renaming the park will not diminish the original justification for the name or the prior contributors. Renaming will follow the same procedures as naming a park/open space, or component feature:
- a. Only parks and facilities named for geographic location, outstanding feature or subdivision should be considered for renaming. Parks that have been named by deed restriction shall not be considered for renaming;
 - b. Parks and facilities named after individuals shall not be changed unless it is found that because of the individual's character the continued use of their name would not be in the best interest of the community.
- 5.3 Existing names will not be changed without the consideration of:
- a. the historical significance of the existing name;
 - b. the impact on the individual or organization associated with the existing name;
 - c. the cost and impact of changing existing signage, rebuilding community recognition and updating records (data bases, maps, promotional materials, etc.).
 - d. consultation with local BIPOC organizations.
- 5.4 Only nominations having a direct relevance to the City property in question will be considered for renaming.
- 5.5 Renaming of City property, or component feature may occur if:
- a. the policy criteria are met; and
 - b. a valid justification for renaming the facility is provided; and
 - c. changing the name will not cause undue confusion within the community; and
 - d. an appropriate level of community support exists.

6.0 Duration of Naming

- 6.1 Unless otherwise negotiated, the duration of the naming will be the useful life of the City Property in question. The party for which the asset has been named will be advised of the impending change.

When the function of asset is changed due to the asset being sold, demolished, substantially renovated, rebuilt or designated for another use, the City may continue to

use the name, transfer the name to another comparable asset, or discontinue the use of the name.

7.0 Inventory of Names

- 7.1 The Recreation & Culture Department shall be responsible for maintaining an inventory of names for City property.
- 7.2 Proposals for names that will not be given consideration or counted as part of the inventory include:
- a. names that cause confusion for the public or emergency services due to duplication with an existing name;
 - b. names that duplicate a school or facility name that is not directly adjacent to the area to be named;
 - c. names that are meaningful only to a few members of the community;
 - d. the proposal suggests name after a specific builder or developer;
 - e. the proposed name advertises a product or private company.

8.0 Signage

- 8.1 The City will be responsible for coordinating the public presentation of signage to acknowledge the name/renaming designation. Costs associated with naming/renaming of City property as outlined in this policy will be assumed by the City of Niagara Falls.
- 8.2 The City will have final approval for the selection and location of any signage, including signage text and design.
- 8.3 The addition of flowers, plant material, other signage and/or ornaments/memorials near the sign, by the public is prohibited.
- 8.4 The City will bear the responsibility of ongoing maintenance for the signage.

PROCEDURES

- 1 Any individual or group wishing to submit a request for naming/renaming any City property must provide a written proposal to the Recreation Committee, c/o the Director of Recreation & Culture Department, and should include at least the following minimum information:
- i. name of the applicant; and
 - ii. identification of the City property to be name/renamed; and
 - iii. proposed name; and
 - iv. background information describing the accomplishments and/or legitimacy of the name designation; and

- v. proposals are encouraged to include letters of endorsement supporting the application.
- 2 When a request for naming/renaming is received staff shall conduct a careful review of the name, including consultation with local BIPOC organizations, to evaluate potential reputational risks and opportunities before moving forward with the next steps. All naming opportunities will be subject to ongoing ethical evaluation to ensure the City's reputation is upheld.
 - 3 When a naming/renaming request is received, staff shall conduct a historical review of the current name of the City property prior to recommending approval.
 - 4 When a naming/renaming request is received, staff shall share the request with all the City's Advisory Committees for their review and input.
 - 5 Once the name has been fully vetted the following steps can take place.
 - 6 The Recreation & Culture Department will convene a meeting of the Recreation Committee, as appropriate, to review the request. Staff will consult and request comments from all other divisions that have jurisdiction relative to the amenity in question. If the Recreation Committee supports moving the naming/renaming request forward the following steps will take place.
 - a. When there is a local neighbourhood association or community group associated with the area in which the City property is to be named, the Recreation & Culture Department will circulate the proposal to those parties.
 - b. When possible, if a request to name/rename is directly associated with, or is on land that has been donated to the City, the original donor or family will be advised.
 - c. When a naming/renaming request is submitted, staff will ensure that the nominee being honoured is in agreement with the naming proposal (if they are living), or by their legal representative should they be deceased.
 - 7 Once vetted by staff and supported by the Recreation Committee, naming/renaming requests will appear on the City's website allowing for (30) thirty calendar days for written comments from the public to the Recreation Committee.
 - 8 Staff will forward the recommendation(s) of the Recreation Committee via a report to Council.
 - 9 The Recreation & Culture Department will notify the applicant of Council's decision.

Submitted By: Kathy Moldenhauer, Director
Recommended By: Jason Burgess, CAO
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