

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF FORT ERIE

PARK NAMING POLICY

SECTION 1.0 – INTRODUCTION

Town parks are an important part of the community fabric and their names contribute to creating a sense of place, community and identity within the Town of Fort Erie. A park name can reflect and acknowledge its unique location, history, geography, environment and/or neighbourhood. Park names should be considered and selected with care, and park naming and renaming should be subject to an established process and set of criteria and principles. This policy establishes the criteria, principles and processes by which Council may consider the naming and renaming of Town parks in a transparent, equitable and efficient manner.

SECTION 2.0 – PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish a clear process for the naming and renaming of Town parks that is transparent, efficient and equitable, and which encourages public participation; and
- Establish criteria and principles to assess the appropriateness of a name and to ensure that names are consistent with the identity, values, and character of the Town of Fort Erie and the area or neighbourhood served.

SECTION 3.0 – DEFINITIONS

3.1 “Commemorative Name” means a name that commemorates an individual, individuals, family or organization;

3.2 “Naming” means officially dedicating a name to a Town park;

3.3 “Park” means any lands owned or under the care and control of the Town, designated as Neighbourhood, Community or Specialized parks pursuant to the Parks and Open Space Master Plan, as amended or replaced, and waterfront parks and windows;

3.4 “Renaming” means officially changing the existing name of a Town park and dedicating a new name;

3.5 “Town” means The Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie.

SECTION 4.0 – NAMING PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

4.1 Naming Principles

When a Town park is named or renamed, the following principles shall be applied:

- a) Names shall be unique; name duplication and similar sounding names shall be avoided;
- b) Names shall have a unique origin. Names shall not recognize an individual, organization, or historic or geographic feature that has already been recognized through the naming of another Town park;
- c) Names shall portray a strong positive image of the Town, give a sense of place, continuity and belonging, and celebrate the distinguishing characteristics and uniqueness of the Town;
- d) The rationale associated with the selection of a particular name shall be understandable and justifiable to Town residents;
- e) Names shall not:
 - a. be political in nature;
 - b. be or be perceived as discriminatory or derogatory of race, colour, ethnic origin, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, creed, disability or other social factors;
 - c. result in inappropriate abbreviations or acronyms;
 - d. unduly detract from the character or integrity of the community or the aesthetic quality of the property;
 - e. impair the ability of First Responders to respond to emergencies.
- f) Names shall be consistent with any other applicable Town policies and standards;
- g) In instances where multiple names have been submitted for a single park, multiple applications shall be processed and submitted for Council consideration;
- h) Notwithstanding any provisions contained in this policy, Council may change a park name;
- i) Town parks that have been named or renamed in the previous twenty (20) years shall not be renamed;

- j) Unless identified as desirable or directed by Council, the renaming of an existing park shall bear a higher threshold of significance, relevance and necessity. To this end, the renaming of an existing park shall require the applicant to identify and ensure the support of those involved in the original park naming and development;
- k) Park signage shall be consistent with the Town's wayfinding standards. Any additional signage requested by an applicant will be considered through a separate process, pursuant to the Town of Fort Erie Guidelines for the Installation of Interpretive Pieces on Municipal Property (2014).

4.2 Naming Criteria

The Town has three (3) accepted categories of names for the naming and renaming of Town parks, being: 1) Geographic, 2) Historic or Cultural, and 3) Prominent Individuals or Organizations. These categories are listed below and are explained for further clarification:

4.2.1 Geographic – A name having direct geographical significance or affiliation with the park, which may include, but is not limited to the following:

- a. a neighbourhood, community or subdivision
- b. an adjacent street
- c. a noteworthy physical, environmental, ecological or scenic feature, quality or characteristic
- d. proximity to a recognizable facility or area

Local examples include Crystal Ridge Park, Shagbark Nature Park and Bowen Road Park

4.2.2 Historic or Cultural – A name having direct historical or cultural significance or affiliation to the park, which may include, but is not limited to the following:

- a. a local, provincial or national historical or heritage event
- b. a reference that is of cultural importance or significance

Local examples include Ridgeway Battlefield Park and United Empire Loyalist Park

4.2.3 Prominent Individuals or Organizations – The name of a Fort Erie resident (living or posthumous) or organization that has direct significance or affiliation to the park, which may include, but is not limited to the following:

- a. individuals or families having a historical connection to the site (such as a previous landowner or land donor)
- b. individuals or organizations having made a significant contribution to the local community or Town

- c. individuals or organizations who have made an outstanding contribution provincially, nationally, or internationally

Local examples include Madelaine Faiazza Memorial Park and Ridgeway Lions Park

- d. In cases where names are affiliated with individuals or organizations, the following criteria must be met:
 - i. The contributions of the individual or organization must be well-documented and broadly acknowledged within the community;
 - ii. A direct relationship or association must exist between the individual or organization and the park being considered;
 - iii. The reputation of the individual or organization must be honorable and beyond reproach to be considered for naming or renaming;
 - iv. In the case of an individual being an elected official or civil servant, he/she must be retired from public service or deceased;
 - v. Written permission shall be obtained from the individual or organization for such naming or renaming;
 - vi. If the individual is deceased, written permission shall be obtained from the next of kin or legal representative for such naming or renaming; and
 - vii. If permission from the individual or organization cannot be obtained, the Town may approve the name if the applicant is able to demonstrate reasonable documented efforts to obtain consent to the satisfaction of the Town.

In cases where applications do not meet the criteria set out in Section 4, an applicant may be referred to the Town's Memorial Bench and Memorial Tree programs as alternative methods of commemoration.

SECTION 5.0 – TOWN PARK NAMING PROCESS

The naming of Town parks may be initiated in two (2) ways: by members of the public, or by Town staff and Council.

5.1 Application Submission

All applicants shall submit a completed **Town of Fort Erie Park Naming Application Form** to Planning and Development Services, providing sufficient information and evidence as to how the proposed name satisfies the Naming Principles and Criteria of this policy. An application will be considered complete if the following information is submitted:

- a. A rationale for the naming request, which addresses the Naming Criteria and Principles of this policy;
- b. Documentation that substantiates the rationale (eg. copies of newspaper articles, certificates, awards, services records, pictures, maps, excerpts from books or articles, historical documents, research articles or documents, etc.)

If the applicant is proposing to name a park after an individual or organization, the following information is also required to be provided by the applicant:

- c. Background information and/or biographical information demonstrating that the proposed name is of significance to the community and/or the Town and is directly linked to the park; and
- d. A letter addressed to the Town from the individual or organization being honoured, or in the event that the individual is deceased or the organization no longer exists, from their next of kin or legal representative, or past members of the organization, granting permission to name the park.

5.2 Application Review

Each application for naming shall undergo a process wherein staff will review the application for conformity to this policy and will circulate the application to relevant stakeholders for review and comment on the suitability of the application. Fort Erie Museum Services staff are the expert resource and authority relative to the historical accuracy and appropriateness of a proposed name.

The duration of the review process will be dictated by the nature of the naming application.

5.3 Community Consultation

Community members shall be informed of all naming requests by way of notification in the newspaper, on the Town website, and through social media.

Following notification, members of the public will have thirty (30) calendar days to provide comments relative to the proposed name.

Information relative to park naming requests will be provided through the Town's online public engagement platforms, through which members of the public may provide input. Comments may also be provided directly to Town staff.

5.4 Costs

a) Park Naming Initiated by the Town

The costs associated with park naming, including but not limited to Town wayfinding signage, administrative, ceremonial, and legal costs, shall be the responsibility of the Town.

b) Park Naming Requests Initiated by Members of the Public

The Town shall bear administrative and Town wayfinding signage costs. All other associated costs shall be the responsibility of the applicant.

SECTION 6.0 – TOWN PARK RENAMING PROCESS

The renaming of Town parks may be initiated in two (2) ways: by members of the public, or by Town staff and Council.

The renaming of Town parks carries with it a much greater impact in comparison to inceptive naming. The tradition, continuity and identification of names are imbedded in the community and tied to important community values. Consideration of a park renaming request carries a higher threshold of significance, relevance and necessity.

An application for park renaming must meet the criteria and principles of this policy, provide valid justification for replacing the existing name, and demonstrate consultation with the community and those originally involved in the naming and development of the park.

Town parks that have been named or renamed in the past twenty (20) years will not be considered for renaming. Critical examination will be conducted to ensure that renaming the park will not diminish the original justification for the name or the prior contributors.

Existing names shall not be changed without the consideration of:

- a. the historical and cultural 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 (databases, maps, promotional materials, legal documents, website, etc.);
- d. the level of community and stakeholder support; and
- e. the best interest of the community.

6.1 Application Submission

All applicants shall submit a completed **Town of Fort Erie Park Naming Application Form** to Planning and Development Services, providing sufficient information and evidence as to how the proposed name satisfies the Naming Principles and Criteria of this policy. An application will be considered complete if the following is submitted:

- a. A rationale for the renaming request, which addresses the Naming Criteria and Principles of this policy;
- b. Documentation that substantiates the rationale (eg. copies of newspaper articles, certificates, awards, services records, pictures, maps, excerpts from books or articles, historical documents, research articles or documents, etc.)

If the applicant is proposing to rename a park after an individual or organization, the following information is also required to be provided by the applicant:

- c. Background information and/or biographical information demonstrating that the proposed name is of significance to the community and/or the Town and is directly linked to the park;
- e. A letter addressed to the Town from the individual or organization being honoured, or in the event that the individual is deceased or the organization no longer exists, from their next of kin or legal representative, or past members of the organization, granting permission to rename the park; and

If the applicant is proposing to change an existing commemorative name, the following information is also required to be provided by the applicant:

- f. Written permission to rename the park from the individual, next of kin or legal representative, organization or past members associated with the original naming or development of the park.

6.2 Application Review

Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis. All applications for renaming shall undergo a process wherein staff will review the application for conformity to this policy and will circulate the application to the relevant stakeholders for review and comment on the suitability of the application. Fort Erie Museum Services staff are the expert resource and authority relative to the historical accuracy and appropriateness of a proposed name.

The duration of the review process will be dictated by the nature of the renaming application.

6.3 Community Consultation

Community members shall be informed of all renaming requests by way of notification in the newspaper, on the Town website, and through social media.

Following notification, members of the public will have thirty (30) calendar days to provide comments relative to the proposed name.

Information relative to park renaming requests will be provided through the Town's online public engagement platforms, through which members of the public may provide input. Comments may also be provided directly to Town staff.

The applicant shall be responsible for demonstrating to the Town that they have identified and consulted with the individual(s) or organization(s) that were involved in the original naming or development of the park. If the individual is deceased or the organization no longer exists, the applicant shall consult with the individual's next of kin or legal representative, or past members of the organization. The applicant must identify the parties consulted, and provide written permission for the name change.

6.4 Costs

a) Park Renaming Initiated by the Town

The costs associated with park renaming, including but not limited to Town wayfinding signage, administrative, ceremonial, and legal costs, shall be the responsibility of the Town.

b) Park Renaming Requests Initiated by Members of the Public

The Town shall bear administrative and Town wayfinding signage replacement costs. All other associated costs shall be the responsibility of the applicant.

SECTION 7.0 – NAME SELECTION

Following application review and community consultation, Town staff shall submit an administrative report to Council, outlining their review process and offering a recommendation for consideration. The report shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. completed application form
- b. background and biographical information
- c. documentation supporting the request
- d. comments from stakeholders
- e. comments from community consultation
- f. associated financial implications
- g. option(s) for consideration
- h. recommendation

Aside from the applicant's name, the applicant's personal information will not be made public.

SECTION 8.0 – FINAL DECISION

The final decision on the naming or renaming of a Town park shall be made by Council.