



Staff Report to Community Advisory Committee

DATE: Tuesday, August 26, 2025

DEPARTMENT: Parks and Recreation and Legislative Services

SUBJECT: Parks Naming Policy – Proposed Repeal and Replacement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At the Regular Council meeting on December 5, 2022, Council directed staff to research and present options for updating the Park Naming Policy (POL-0120-PARK) for Council review and approval and indicated interest in increased public involvement in the park naming process.

The attached proposed Parks Naming Policy (POL-0183-PARK) provides opportunities for community engagement in the naming of City parks, trails and park features. This initiative also provides Council with the opportunity to recognise distinguished community members, and foster truth and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples by creating a formal process through which local First Nations can gift park names upon the City.

BACKGROUND:

The City's current Park Naming Policy (POL-0120-PARK) was adopted in 1996, and the Policy for Naming Trail Sections (POL-0121-PARK) was adopted in 1999. Neither of the policies have been updated since they were originally approved. These policies provide limited guidelines for naming parks and trails, and do not provide for Indigenous consultation, or public engagement opportunities.

The proposed Parks Naming Policy emphasizes meaningful community engagement, provides an opportunity to honour significant members of the community, and reflects the City's ongoing commitment to truth and reconciliation by establishing a collaborative process to engage with local First Nations to gift names that reflect and honour places of cultural significance, language, and history. The policy also provides City staff with the flexibility to adapt public engagement approaches to naming initiatives.

COMMENTARY:

The proposed policy will apply to the naming and renaming of all parks, trails, and park features such as playgrounds, fountains, and playfields within the City, with the exception of lands which are purchased or donated and for which there is a conditional naming provision pursuant to the purchase and sale agreement.

Process for Naming or Renaming Trails and Park Features

Trails and park features, such as sports fields, gardens, fountains, or other amenities which are wholly contained within a park (such as an arena or section of an arena) will be named according to the same process.

When the City is ready to name or rename a trail or park feature, the Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities (the “Director”) may name the trail or park feature after an adjacent street, the community in which the park is located, according to a theme, flora or fauna, a natural feature, a significant landmark, or a historical event of significance to the City.

The Director has the discretion to initiate public engagement before naming or renaming a trail or park feature, with the extent of public participation determined by the Communications Department. Additionally, the Director may require that the naming process for significant trails or park features align with the established procedures for naming parks.

Process for Naming or Renaming Parks

When the City is ready to name or rename a park, staff will first prepare a report for a meeting of Council which will include up to three options for a park naming process:

Option 1 - First Nations Engagement:

If Council selects this option, the Communications Department will then consult with local First Nations to determine whether a Nation wishes to gift a name for the park. If a gifted name is received, it would be formally adopted by Council without further deliberation.

Upon the receipt of a gifted name, the Communications Department will work collaboratively with the gifting First Nation to ensure that park signage appropriately reflects information about the gifted name, and that all signage is reviewed and approved by the respective First Nation. Gifted names will be

commemorated at a naming ceremony organized in collaboration and at the direction of the First Nation who gifted the name.

Option 2 - Person of Significance to the City:

Parks, trails and park features may be named after a person of significance to the City, in accordance with the policy guidelines. City staff or members of Council may put forward potential names to be considered by Council, with a description of the person's contributions to the city. Staff will then reach out to the individual or their family (if they have passed), to receive approval of the naming proposal. The park name will be adopted by Council, and Council will rise and report on the park name.

Names may be commemorated at a naming ceremony organized in collaboration with the individual or their family.

Option 3 - Public Engagement:

City staff may use a public engagement platform or other venues to gather community input for parks names. The results of public engagement will be reviewed by staff and may inform the options presented to Council for consideration.

First Nations Engagement in Parks Naming

Council's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan includes objective 6c – Continue to Take Action Towards Reconciliation. This includes a commitment to implement actions specific to local governments as outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and to work with Indigenous partners and celebrate Indigenous culture.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action* call upon municipal governments to adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People* (UNDRIP) as a framework for reconciliation. UNDRIP, which is enshrined in British Columbia law, recognizes that Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, language, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literature, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

The gifting of a name by a local First Nation is a great privilege for the City, and a significant act of generosity by a First Nation. Introducing a process for local First Nations to gift names is intended to reflect collaboration between the City and Indigenous communities, as well as advance Truth and

Reconciliation efforts.

The City recognizes that there are multiple First Nations on whose traditional territory the City is located. Staff would work directly with each First Nation to determine the best process for working together.

Persons of Significance to the City

The City proudly commemorates the enduring dedication and meaningful contributions of community members who make the City vibrant, welcoming and connected. Naming a park after a person reflects the City's deep appreciation for a person's commitment to the community and allows a person's legacy to be woven into the fabric of the City and continue to inspire future generations.

Parks may be named after persons, such as, but not limited to, former elected officials, firefighters, police, veterans, and community leaders. Parks will not be named after elected officials who currently hold office.

Community Engagement

Council's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan includes objective 5c – Expand Opportunities for Public Engagement:

Improved public engagement will better connect the residents with City Hall by promoting inclusivity, collective progress, and active democracy [...]

The proposed policy permits the Director to initiate community engagement when naming or renaming a trail or park feature. Council may also direct that community engagement be undertaken in naming or renaming a Park.

The Communications Department will assess and implement public engagement strategies according to the policy. City staff may use a public engagement platform, social media, or other appropriate methods to connect with the community.

Some examples of potential engagement opportunities include allowing the public to:

- (1) suggest names,
- (2) pick from categories or themes for possible names (i.e. flora, fauna, notable feature, adjacent street),
- (3) rank their preferences from name options presented, or

(4) a combination of these opportunities.

Parks Master Plan

The City is working with an external consultant to develop a Parks and Trails Master Plan. The scope of the Parks and Trails Master Plan does not include a Parks Naming Policy. The future Parks and Trails Master Plan may include a new recommended classification system for parks and parkland but is not expected to conflict with the proposed Parks Naming Policy.

Staff are recommending that the proposed policy be adopted as presented.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The proposed new Parks Naming Policy can be managed within existing resources.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no noted legal implications in respect to the proposed repeal and replacement of these policies.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

5 – Good Governance
5c – Expand Opportunities for Public Engagement
6c – Continue to Take Action Towards Reconciliation

OPTIONS:

Option 1

THAT the Community Advisory Committee recommend that Council repeal City of Langford “Park Naming Policy” (POL-0120-PARK) and “Policy for Naming Trail Sections” (POL-0121-PARK) and replace them with City of Langford “Parks Naming Policy” (POL-0183-PARK) as presented.

OR Option 2

THAT the Community Advisory Committee recommend that Council repeal City of Langford “Park Naming Policy” (POL-0120-PARK) and “Policy for Naming Trail Sections” (POL-0121-PARK) and replace them with City of Langford “Parks Naming Policy” (POL-0183-PARK) with the following amendments:

- a. _____;
- b. _____;
- c. _____.

OR Option 3

THAT the Community Advisory Committee recommend that Council take no action with respect to amending City of Langford “Parks Naming Policy” (POL-0120-PARK) and “Policy for Naming Trail Sections” (POL-0121-PARK) at this time.

SUBMITTED BY: Richard Wagner, Policy Analyst and Legislative Drafter

Concurrence: Melisa Miles, Manager of Legislative Services

Concurrence: Donna Petrie, Senior Manager of Communications & Economic Development

Concurrence: Yari Nielsen, Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities

Concurrence: Matthew Baldwin, RPP, MCIP, Director of Development Services

Concurrence: Leah Stohmann, RPP, MCIP, Director of Community Planning and Climate Change

Concurrence: Kevin Bowbyes, P.Eng., Deputy Director of Engineering and Public Works

Concurrence: Michael Dillabaugh, CPA, CA, Director of Finance

Concurrence: Marie Watmough, Director of Legislative & Protective Services

Concurrence: Braden Hutchins, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Concurrence: Darren Kiedyk, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments: Appendix A – Current “Park Naming Policy” (POL-0120-PARK)

Appendix B – Current “Policy for Naming Trail Sections” (POL-0121-PARK)

Appendix C – Proposed “Parks Naming Policy” (POL-0183-PARK)