

Community Initiated Memorials Policy

SOURCE:	Crime Reduction and Intervention Division		
POLICY NUMBER:	Draft: A-CS-2024-002		
APPROVED BY:	Council		
EFFECTIVE DATE:	Draft, pending	REVISION DATE:	Original

Purpose

This policy outlines the framework and guiding objectives governing the City's response to community initiated memorials. The policy includes key City resources to be engaged in this response, as well as guidelines for communication, review and management of community initiated memorials on City property.

Scope

This policy applies to all City owned, leased or operated property, infrastructure and facilities.

Background

Community-driven memorials occur in the aftermath of a disturbing or traumatic incident, most frequently in the event of an unexpected death. These public displays reflect the loss felt by those who set up the memorial. The nature or reminder of the incident can also cause upset and create concern within the broader community. Occasionally the content or placement of memorials can create safety, operational or maintenance concerns for public space and infrastructure.

This policy provides an enterprise-based City response to community initiated memorials that is equitable and consistent, upholding community safety for the greatest public good. The integration of trauma-informed processes ensures the City remains sensitive and responsive to the needs of diverse stakeholder groups.

Policy

The City will undertake review and respond to all complaints or concerns regarding community initiated memorials, including from members of the public. Once the City is aware of a complaint or concern, the following framework will be used to assess whether a memorial should be considered for removal. However, there may be additional relevant considerations depending on the memorial. For example, the City will review considerations including, but not limited to:

1. Potential safety concerns. For example, those memorials that present a visual distraction or obstruction to drivers; such as large

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eye-catching displays, or those that include solar lighting or other electronic elements.

2. Abandoned or derelict. Examples could include those with decomposing flowers, sodden stuffed toys or other materials vulnerable to outside elements.
3. Obstruction of public space or infrastructure. Examples might include memorials that obstruct the use of a bike path, trail, parking sign or other infrastructure such as a sidewalk or playground.
4. Memorials that are incompatible with adjacent uses of space (such as schools, playgrounds, playfields or other areas frequented by children).
5. Violating personal information and privacy of individuals or others other than the subject person(s) of the memorial. This can include images of minors or other people who have not consented to their use; or other named individuals who have not consented or complain about their personal information being included in the memorial.
6. Those memorials in close proximity to a private residence, while unassociated to the occupants.

Occasionally City staff will become aware of a memorial prior to receiving any complaints or concerns from the community. The above same criteria will be used to determine if proactive removal of the memorial needs to be undertaken prior to receiving such concerns or complaints.

The decision to initiate removal of a memorial will remain with the General Manager of Community Safety, in accordance with the above framework and through consultation with staff.

General Principles and Objectives

1.0 Coordinated and Systematic Response

The Crime Reduction and Intervention Division is responsible for coordinating with other City departments to ensure a consistent response set out in this policy.

2.0 Managing Memorial Items

Family members or other identified parties associated with the establishment of the memorial will be notified of a decision to remove a memorial whenever possible. They will be permitted to remove memorial artifacts themselves or elect to have City staff do so.

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If City staff have been unable to contact family or other parties associated with the memorial through reasonable efforts, staff shall remove the memorial items and store them in a secure location for thirty days.

Removals without contact may have a notice posted on the memorial location including how to reach staff to retrieve memorial materials for this thirty-day period. Staff will otherwise safely dispose of collected items that have been held for thirty days.

3.0 Sensitive, Trauma Informed Response

The City seeks to implement a trauma-informed response to the management of community initiated memorials.

3.1 – Dealings with Family: Staff with training and experience with trauma informed practice will act as primary contact with the family or other identified parties associated with the establishment of the memorial whenever possible. This communication may include but will not be limited to information about this policy; other grief supports and referrals available to them, as well as potential alternative means to memorialize their loved one through established City programs when available.

3.2 – Dealings with Community: Community concerns and complaints about these memorials will be recorded in compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and responded to in a systematic manner. This response may include but will not be limited to information about this policy; timelines for review processes and potential removal of the memorial if appropriate. Personal information collected for this purpose will only be retained for its useful period and retained for two years, then destroyed.

3.3 – Supporting our People: City staff involved in any physical removal of memorials will be briefed on the assignment through crew talks in advance. A supervisor will offer follow-up after the removal as necessary and according to established departmental procedures, including to provide any necessary resources such as access to the Employee and Family Assistance Program.

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Responsibilities General Manager Community Safety/City Leadership Team

- Decisions under this policy, and on-going review and recommended updates to this Community Initiated Memorials Policy document.

Departmental General Managers/Directors and Managers

- Upholding the principles of this Community Initiated Memorials Policy; this includes ensuring department specific procedures for recording and responding to community concerns about memorials, to ensure a consistent and equitable City response.

Engineering Department

- Complying with all aspects of this Community Initiated Memorials Policy.
- Ensuring adequate storage, retention, and possible disposal of memorial artifacts according to pre-established departmental procedures.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

- Complying with all aspects of this Community Initiated Memorials Policy.
- Ensuring adequate storage, retention, and possible disposal of memorial artifacts according to pre-established departmental procedures.

Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Division

- Ensuring that any decisions made with regards to memorials related to the history of colonization and/or reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples will be made in consultation and collaboration with Indigenous Peoples following appropriate cultural protocols.

Crime Reduction and Intervention Division

- Complying with all aspects of this Community Initiated Memorials Policy.
- Ensuring that the Community Initiated Memorials Policy remains current and recommending modifications as needed.
- Maintaining ongoing communication with other departments to ensure community concerns are responded to in a consistent and equitable manner. This may include referrals and requests for

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follow-up, as well as direct communication with concerned residents, or families and other parties responsible for the establishment of the memorial as required.

Burnaby RCMP Victim Services

- Complying with all aspects of this Community Initiated Memorials Policy.
- Undertaking primary communication and follow up support service with the family or other identified parties associated with the establishment of the memorial whenever possible, after receiving consent for services.

City Staff

- Awareness of the general principles and guiding objectives of this policy.
- Maintaining strong levels of customer service and confidentiality when dealing with complaints about community initiated memorials.

Assistance, Guidance, or Policy Clarification

If you require assistance, guidance, or clarification regarding this policy, please contact the Crime Reduction and Intervention Manager.

Leon Gous
Chief Administrative Officer

	Date	Updated by	Description
1.0	January 22, 2024	Dawn Virginillo	Original Community Initiated Memorials Policy

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