

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

**TO:**            *MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: INTERIM GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR NAMING CIVIC ASSETS**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the proposed guidelines and procedures for naming civic assets outlined in Section 3.0 of the report titled “Interim Guidelines and Procedures for Naming Civic Assets” of the Open Executive Committee of Council meeting, dated December 4, 2024, be approved.

**REPORT**

The Executive Committee of Council, at its meeting held on December 4, 2024, received and adopted the attached report seeking Council endorsement for a set of guidelines and procedures for the naming of civic assets, as an interim measure pending the development of a comprehensive Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of Council,

Councillor Sav Dhaliwal  
Chair

Councillor P. Calendino  
Vice Chair

**TO:** EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (ECC)  
**FROM:** GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES  
**SUBJECT:** **INTERIM GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR NAMING CIVIC ASSETS**  
**PURPOSE:** To seek Council endorsement of a set of guidelines and procedures for the naming of civic assets, as an interim measure pending the development of a comprehensive Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT** the proposed guidelines and procedures for naming civic assets outlined in Section 3.0 of the report titled “Interim Guidelines and Procedures for Naming Civic Assets” dated December 4, 2024, be approved.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The formal acknowledgement and endorsement by Council of guidelines and procedures for naming civic assets is required to provide direction to staff to advance recommended names for civic assets. Interim guidelines and procedures will serve as foundational elements to help inform the final comprehensive, consulted, and research-backed policy for civic naming and commemoration (“Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy”) that is planned to be advanced to Council in fall 2025. This report details previous Council guidance on the naming of civic assets, proposes interim guidelines for naming based on best practices, provides information on procedures to advance names for Council’s approval, and delineates the scope and timeline for a forthcoming Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy.

### 1.0 POLICY SECTION

The Executive Committee of Council (Executive Committee) is responsible for making recommendations to Council on the naming of parks, civic buildings, and facilities, as outlined in the Terms of Reference for the committee. This report is supported by the following policy:

- Official Community Plan (1998);
- Burnaby Procedure Bylaw (2024); and
- Corporate Strategic Plan (2022).

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

This report supersedes an earlier version that was presented to the Executive Committee at its September 4, 2024 meeting. At that meeting, the committee adopted a motion recommending that the report be referred back to staff in order to incorporate several recommended changes. Council approved the recommendation at its September 23, 2024 meeting. The September 23, 2024 Council report is included as Attachment 2.

**2.1 Existing Council Guidance and Direction for Naming Civic Assets**

Guidelines for commemorating individuals are found in the November 15, 1982 Council report, “Naming of Freeman of the Municipality, Park Names and Street Names.” The report recommends that selection of individuals as Freeman or as the namesakes of parks be reserved for those who have made outstanding contributions to the community, and that the honour be conferred sparingly only upon individuals who have given outstanding community and/or public service within the general community over a sustained period of time. It is noted that since 1982, the *Municipal Act* has been amended to remove the power of local governments to honour a distinguished person with the title of “freeman of the municipality.” Today, today Section 158 of the *Community Charter* provides for a municipal Council to honour a distinguished person with “freedom of the municipality.”

The November 15, 1982 report further recommends that consideration be given to elected or appointed municipal officials as namesakes for parks, as well as citizens at large who have given outstanding service to the community.

In 1989, Council created the Housing and Civic Development Committee (later the Finance and Civic Development Committee) and part of its overall responsibilities included submitting for Council’s consideration the proposed names of new buildings and facilities, other than those located in City parks.

At its May 7, 2007 meeting, Council authorized the Finance and Civic Development Committee to develop and recommend names for civic buildings and facilities not located in City parks. The report identified that the committee would take the following criteria into consideration for its work:

- The need to consult and receive suggestions from the community and others as appropriate.
- The merit of using the names of past and present Burnaby Freeman and Gold Key recipients that have not already been recognized in a civic facility or park name, or other appropriate references for names (note: “Gold Key” was an award equivalent to “Freeman,” used before the “Freeman” honour was made possible through the *Municipal Act* in the 1960s).
- The wishes of the person to be honoured or of the family of a deceased person, as possible.

- The review and selection of names through Closed Council reports until a final decision is authorized in order to respect the privacy of individuals being considered.

In response to a February 2021 staff report recommending guidelines to consider requests for commemorative plaques on the grounds of City Hall, the Executive Committee provided direction to staff to align commemorative policy with Burnaby’s community spirit and values (including fostering inclusivity within the community). The committee also requested that commemorative processes include opportunities for proposals to be received from the community, not only for commemorations located on the grounds of City Hall, but at any City location.

The reports summarized above provide guidance when considering naming a civic asset after an individual, with an emphasis on the significance of the person’s contribution to Burnaby, including lengthy and sustained service. Direction from the Executive Committee from February 2021 articulates a desire for commemorative initiatives to reflect a commitment to inclusion and the contemporary values of the City.

**2.2 Council Direction for an Updated Policy**

At its November 20, 2023 meeting, Council authorized staff to implement action items outlined in the *Implementation of the Heritage Policy and Programs Review* report, including:

*Develop a policy to guide the naming of civic facilities (including parks) and streets, and a commemoration policy to guide the City’s official commemoration of important places, people, and events through plaques and other commemorative works. The policy will be reflective of the City’s commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and to equity, diversity, and inclusion.*

Work on developing a policy for naming and commemoration (“Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy”) is in progress and is being led by the Planning and Development Department with support from the Corporate Services Department and the Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Division, and input from other impacted departments. An interdepartmental staff working group will guide the development of the policy and serve as a resource for the Executive Committee and Department Heads to implement the interim guidelines and procedures outlined in this report.

As there is an immediate need to receive guidance from Council for the naming of new civic facilities, this report seeks Council’s approval of interim guidelines and procedures for the naming of civic assets.

Should Council support the recommendations in this report, the Interim Guidelines and Procedures for Naming of Civic Assets outlined in this report will guide staff to advance proposed names for civic assets while the more comprehensive policy for naming and commemoration is under development.

**3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION**

**3.1 Interim Guidelines and Procedures for Naming Civic Assets**

The proposed interim guidelines and procedures outlined below and in Attachment #1 provide guidance on the types of assets that should be named, how to select names, and the process for approval.

**3.1.1 Scope of Interim Guidelines and Procedures**

***Naming of Parks, Civic Buildings and Facilities***

The Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Executive Committee assign it responsibility for making recommendations to Council on the naming of parks, civic buildings, and civic facilities. These guidelines and procedures would apply to the naming of those assets.

***Naming of Assets within Parks, Civic Buildings and Facilities***

Should Council wish to name other types of assets, such as rooms in civic buildings, or trails or features in a City park, direction can be provided to staff through a Council resolution. Examples of assets that have been named through this process include:

- The Pixie McGeachie Reading Room at the City Archives in McGill Library;
- Drummond’s Walk at Barnet Marine Park; and
- The Central Park Variety Playground.

Guidance for naming other types of assets can be found in Attachment 1 (Interim Guidelines and Procedures for Naming Civic Assets)

***Indigenous Names***

The City currently does not have a process for receiving or requesting the gift of an Indigenous name from the Host First Nations, which include the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), and kʷikwəłəm (Kwikwetlem) First Nations. Developing a protocol for Indigenous naming is within the scope of the policy review for the Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy that is described in Section 3.3 of this report. Names that refer to Indigenous peoples and cultures, are based on Indigenous place names, are written in an Indigenous language, or could otherwise be considered an Indigenous name must be generated in consultation with the Host First Nations following appropriate cultural protocols.

In the event that Council directs that an Indigenous name should be considered for a specific asset before a protocol has been established, it is recommended that a temporary geographic-based name be identified that could be replaced with an Indigenous name at a later date.

**3.1.2 Guidelines for Naming an Asset for an Individual**

Naming a civic asset is a way to recognize or acknowledge significant individuals who have contributed to, and shaped, the City of Burnaby. The following guidelines can be used when considering naming a civic asset for a person:

- A decision to honour a specific individual should include consideration of length of service, with a preference for individuals with a sustained period of service to the City and/or the community.
- Consideration should be given to how the nominee serves as an exemplar of the City of Burnaby’s values as set out in the Corporate Strategic Plan: Community, Integrity, Respect, Innovation, and Passion. The values of equity, diversity and inclusion should also be considered.
- Assets should not be named for a member of Council or other elected or appointed official representative of the City of Burnaby while they are holding office, or for a City staff member while they are employed at the City.

**3.1.3 Guidelines for Naming Assets Based on Geography**

Many civic assets have place names based on geographic location. Examples include the Burnaby Art Gallery, the Edmonds Community Centre or the Riverway Golf Course. The following guidelines can be used when naming a civic asset for a geographic feature:

- Use of the name “Burnaby” should be reserved for assets that serve the community as a whole.
- Geographic place names should correspond to their location, either by reflecting existing names or natural, cultural and/or built characteristics.

Note that place names that are in turn named for a person (such as Edmonds and Willingdon) are considered geographic-based names.

**3.1.4 General Procedure for Naming Assets**

Names of civic assets are approved by Council, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee of Council. An interim procedure is included in Attachment #1 to address the naming of civic assets until the comprehensive Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy has been adopted.

**3.2 Removing or Replacing an Existing Name**

Consideration of a process for removing and/or replacing a name or commemoration that no longer reflects the City’s values will be considered as part of the development of the Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy.

In practice, the City has decommissioned names when an asset has reached the end of its lifecycle and is demolished. An interim procedure is included in Attachment #1 to

address the decommissioning of names until the Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy is complete.

**3.3 Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy Development**

Work is underway to develop the Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy, a comprehensive policy to guide the naming of streets and civic assets, and for the installation of memorials and commemorative installations at City-owned parks and facilities. The policy will also give consideration to the use of Indigenous names for civic assets, including protocols for engaging the Host First Nations in naming and commemorative activities. The policy will include guidance for decommissioning names, memorials, and commemorative installations. The project team will consider if guidance for Council recognition of events should be included in the policy. The timeline for this work is as follows:

- Phase I: Confirm scope, project team, and resources (August 2024)
- Phase II: Undertake research and initial consultation, including initiating engagement with Host First Nations through the referrals process (October 2024)
- Phase III: Prepare draft policy directions for stakeholder engagement (January 2025)
- Phase IV: Present final report (Fall 2025)
- Phase V: Implementation (Fall 2025/Winter 2026)

Reporting on the work to the Executive Committee will take place prior to stakeholder engagement in Phase III; the final report with policy recommendations will be advanced to Council through the Executive Committee in Fall 2025.

**4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

No community engagement is planned to implement the recommendation of this report, which involves implementing interim guidelines and procedures for naming civic assets. It is anticipated that the interim guidelines and procedures contained within this report, and in Attachment 1, will be replaced by the Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy in early 2026. Development of the Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy will include community consultation and engagement with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), and kwikwəłəm (Kwkwetlem) First Nations.

**5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Resources for developing the Burnaby Naming and Commemoration Policy and related engagement are included in the operating budget of the Planning and Development Department.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee-Ann Garnett, for E.W. Kozak, General Manager Planning and Development

Juli Halliwell, General Manager Corporate Services

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1 – Interim Guidelines and Procedures for Naming Civic Assets
- Attachment 2 – Council Report, Interim Guidelines and Procedures for Naming Civic Assets (September 23, 2024)

**REPORT CONTRIBUTORS**

This report was prepared by Lisa Codd, Heritage Planner and reviewed by Lily Ford, Planner 3; May Leung, City Solicitor and Johannes Schumann, Director Community Planning.