



# Town of Whitby Policy

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<b>Policy Title:</b>	Municipal Property and Facility Naming Policy
<b>Policy Number:</b>	MS 250
<b>Category:</b>	Municipal Service Levels
<b>Reference:</b>	Council Resolution #28-09, #204-25 and #83-26
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<b>Approval:</b>	Council
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Community Services

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## Policy Statement

The naming of municipal properties, including buildings, parks and other features associated with Town owned properties are important for public identification, wayfinding, facilitating emergency access, and the promotion of civic identity. Given the significance associated with naming, this policy provides a clear and inclusive process to guide naming decisions for municipal properties and features covered by the scope of this policy.

## Purpose

The objective of the policy is to:

- a) Ensure that the naming of municipal properties reflects Whitby's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and reconciliation and as such ensures that the naming of municipal properties reflects the community's diverse history, cultures, and contributions, and promotes equitable representation.
- b) Offer inclusive guidelines for the naming of municipal properties, property features and facilities.
- c) Establish a transparent and equitable process and criteria for evaluating naming requests initiated by Council, Staff and members of the public.
- d) Define criteria for determining names that are inappropriate or non-compliant with Town values.
- e) Ensure naming reflects the property's prominence, supports wayfinding, celebrates the diversity of the community and fosters civic pride.

- f) Enable community engagement in the nomination and selection of names.
- g) Provide opportunities to support the Town’s Truth and Reconciliation initiatives with Indigenous peoples.
- h) Affirm Council’s authority to name or rename municipal properties and features at its discretion, in alignment with the principles and criteria outlined in this policy.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all Town-owned Parks, Community Facilities and Property Features (collectively referred to as “Town properties and features”), including:

- Parks
- Community centres, arenas, and other specialty buildings and rooms
- Cultural venues
- Libraries
- Open spaces and trails
- Property features

Facilities that are not included:

- Streets
- Municipal parking lots
- Firehalls
- Stormwater management ponds
- Town-owned properties not open for community use

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## 1. Definitions

- 1.1. **Administrative Name** means a name assigned to a Town property or property feature pursuant to section 3.1(g) based on the criteria set out in sections 4.2 and 4.3(a) and (b).
- 1.2. **Community Facilities** means any buildings, spaces, or structures owned or operated by the Town that are intended for public use and serve the recreational, cultural, social, or educational needs of the community. This includes but is not limited to community centres, recreation complexes, arenas, libraries, cultural venues, and similar amenities accessible to residents and visitors.
- 1.3. **Corporate Sponsorship** refers to a reciprocal commercial transaction between the Town and a business entity whereby the business receives specific services, rights and privileges related to Municipal property for a defined period for a specific monetary fee. The intent of the transaction is to advance the commercial interests of the business – usually through marketing, communication, awareness and image enhancement. Corporate sponsorship is usually time specific (i.e. one to five years in duration).
- 1.4. **Donation** means a voluntary gift/transfer property (including cash) to the Town of Whitby without valuable consideration being provided in return. Donations may qualify for Donation Receipts for Income Tax purposes in accordance with the Canadian Income Tax Act and Canada Revenue Agency regulations.
- 1.5. **Indigenous Naming** means a name proposed in an Indigenous language or referencing Indigenous heritage, history, or cultural contributions. Such naming must involve consultation and collaboration with local Indigenous communities.
- 1.6. **Naming** means the designation of an official name or title to a particular park, municipal property or a property feature.
- 1.7. **Property Feature** means any substantial structure or identifiable element within a property including but not limited to rooms and areas within buildings, individual or groupings of sports fields, swimming pools and trails.
- 1.8. **Renaming** means the designation of a new official name or title to an existing and previously named property.
- 1.9. **Town Property** means all parks, community centres, arenas cultural venues, libraries, and like property owned and administered by the Town of Whitby and that provide for a public use by the community.

## 2. Responsibilities

- 2.1. Council has the responsibility to:

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- a) Approve municipal property and feature names based on this Policy, public consultation and the recommendations of staff.
- b) Provide input on suggested names.

2.2. Staff of the Parks Planning and Development and Facilities Divisions have the responsibility to:

- a) Oversee and manage the Municipal Property and Facility Naming Policy and updates, as needed.
- b) Develop and implement Municipal Property and Facility Naming procedures related to the Policy.
- c) Coordinate public consultation related to naming of Town properties and features.
- d) Consult with the Town's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism (IDEA) Specialist and the Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee when evaluating names with cultural or commemorative significance.
- e) Consult with the Town's Library Board when evaluating names for library facilities
- f) Consult with Advertising and Sponsorship Sales Manager, to determine whether a Sponsorship opportunity exists.
- g) Proposed Advertising and Sponsorship initiatives associated with the Municipal Property and Facility Naming Policy are to be approved by the Commissioner of Community Services.
- h) Evaluate requests for renaming Town properties.
- i) Report to Council on recommendations for the naming of Town properties.

### **3. General Requirements**

3.1. Naming of Town Properties and Features

- a) In general, the naming of the following Town properties and features shall be informed by consultation with the public:
  - i. Parks
  - ii. Community Facilities
- b) Public consultation related to naming may be integrated into the planning and consultation process of capital projects.

- c) Public consultation will provide opportunities for the public to submit a suggested name, including a brief explanation of the meaning of the name, and an explanation of how the proposed name complies with the naming criteria of this Policy.
- d) As part of public consultation, staff will also provide a short-list of potential candidate names, based on the naming criteria of this Policy, for feedback.
- e) A final list of candidate names, including a description of their meaning and alignment with this Policy, will be shared with the community so individuals can select/rank their preferred name(s).
- f) The results of the public consultation will be included in the recommendation report to Council identifying the recommended name.
- g) Properties and property features not listed under section 3.1 a) may be left unnamed, where appropriate, or assigned an Administrative Name by staff based on the criteria of section 4.2 and 4.3 (a and b) of this Policy.
- h) There may be additional naming requirements for different types of properties and features listed under the scope of this policy identified in the associated procedures.

### 3.2. Renaming of Existing Town Properties and Features

- a) Once a name is selected based on public consultation, the property or feature name should not normally be renamed. Council may consider renaming a property or feature on an exceptional basis, such as when new information regarding the appropriateness or effectiveness of a name becomes apparent.
- b) Council reserves the right to initiate a renaming process for properties bearing names that are inconsistent with evolving community values, equity principles, or historical truths.
- c) Properties and features that have been assigned an Administrative Name or which are unnamed may be renamed or named when directed by Council.
- d) Where Council directs the renaming of a property or feature, a new name will be selected based on this Policy.
- e) The cost and impact of changing existing signage and re-building community recognition should be considered before a property or feature is renamed.

### 3.3. Indigenous Naming Opportunities

- a) Where consideration for naming opportunities to celebrate or commemorate Indigenous history or community members are identified by the public, or

through the Town's Truth and Reconciliation commitments, all indigenous naming opportunities will be developed in consultation with Williams Treaty First Nations (WTFNs) to ensure cultural accuracy and respect.

#### 3.4. Reports to Council

- a) Staff shall prepare a report for Council outlining the results of public consultation and any recommendations related to naming of a Town property or feature listed under section 3.1 and when otherwise directed by Council.
- b) A report to Council is not required when a property or property feature is assigned an Administrative Name.

### 4. Naming Criteria

4.1. The suggestion of names for Town properties and features covered by this policy shall generally be based on:

- i. Geographic features; and/or
- ii. Names reflecting a positive image of the Town.

#### 4.2. Geographic Features

- a) Geographic names should be clear, descriptive and give a sense of place. They may include:
  - A reflection of the location of the property or feature (unique community or neighbourhood identifiers).
  - The name of the street where the property resides.
  - A noteworthy physical, environmental, geological, topographical or scenic characteristic.
  - Proximity to a recognizable facility or landmark.

#### 4.3. Positive Image of the Town

- a) Portray a strong positive image of Whitby, recognizing the historical, cultural and social significance of the area, the Town, region, province or country.
- b) Are in keeping with a specific theme (historical, cultural, or other significance to the Town) that highlights and promotes activities and industries that are/were prevalent in Whitby.
- c) Reflect the cultural, social, environmental and economic well-being of the Town and/or honour the significant contributions made by individuals, groups or organizations to the community.

- d) Names with shared community significance put forward by residents as part of public engagement.

#### 4.4. Use of Person Names

- a) In accordance with this Policy, a person's name may be considered for a naming opportunity. Such use shall be limited to individual(s) who have:
- Made a significant contribution to Whitby or to a group or association within the community, which has improved the quality of life for Whitby residents. This includes retired Members of Council and staff that have made positive, lasting and acknowledged contributions to the Town;
  - Demonstrated excellent, courageous, innovative or exceptional service to the citizens of Whitby, the Province of Ontario, or Canada;
  - Worked to foster inclusion, equality and reduce discrimination; and
  - Demonstrated themselves to be a recognized national or international figure/leader commonly acknowledged to have high standing and repute.
- b) If the proposed name will identify a specific person, consent of the individual, or if deceased, consent of the family or next of kin (if the person is not a national or international public figure) is required.
- c) Names should not be divisive in nature. When an individual or group is identified by a name, best efforts should be taken to ensure that the name is not seen as linked with discrimination, oppression and systemic racism nor in violation of community standards as they exist at the time of naming. Names that are otherwise offensive, misleading, or ineffective are also not permitted.
- d) Suggestions for names in honour of individuals must be accompanied by a written biography of the individual, including a description of the individual's significant contribution and an explanation of why the honour should be given.

#### 4.5. Names Not Eligible

- a) Certain names will not be considered for municipal properties and features. This includes names which:
- Are duplicate, ambiguous, overly similar to other property names or would otherwise cause confusion;
  - Would bring the image of the Town of Whitby into disrepute;
  - Refer to gambling, tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, products or brands;
  - May be seen as promoting or endorsing specific political, ideological, or religious positions;
  - Would be considered discriminatory, derogatory or offensive according

- to race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or similar factors;
- Convey a secondary negative or offensive connotation;
- Are of elected or appointed officials currently in office;
- Impair the ability of First Responders to respond to emergencies or impair the Town's ability to deliver services;
- Result in inappropriate abbreviations or acronyms;
- Fail to reflect the shared values of the Town;
- Exclude or marginalize people, identities or communities; and
- Are associated with criminal activity, colonial oppression, racism or historical injustice.

b) Council at its sole discretion may make the determination that a name is not eligible.

## 5. Corporate Sponsorship and Donations

5.1. The Town recognizes and supports Asset Sponsorship and Naming Rights as an alternative revenue generation strategy to offset costs associated with the provision of municipal services. Policy MS-390 Paid Advertising Sponsorship Policy defines the criteria and guidance related to paid advertising and sponsorship opportunities related to Town events, properties, projects, services and/or programs.

5.2. Where a Sponsorship or Donation opportunity is identified, the provisions of Section 5 will apply. Section 3 and 4 do not apply, unless otherwise stated, if a property or feature is being named pursuant to a sponsorship or donations opportunity.

### 5.3. Corporate Sponsorship

- a) Corporate sponsorships are pursued for various facility assets and events, including parks and recreation property features, under the guidance and direction of the Advertising and Sponsorship Sales Manager. This includes the sale of naming rights for specific properties and features, such as arenas at Town sports facilities and the lounge at the Port Whitby Marina Clubhouse. Naming rights are granted for a defined term at an agreed-upon fee and defined within a legal agreement. Despite any other provision in this Policy, Section 4.5 applies to Corporate Sponsorships.
- b) When offering sponsorship opportunities, names shall not replace or interfere with the Town's wayfinding system or signage. For example, where arenas are identified by number within the wayfinding system; in such cases, the numerical designation must remain intact (e.g., *Arena 1 – Scotiabank*), and shall not be replaced solely with a sponsor's name (i.e., not *Scotiabank Arena*).

- c) Proposed Advertising and Sponsorship initiatives associated with the Municipal Property and Facility Naming Policy are to be approved by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), or delegate.
- d) The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), or delegate, is authorized to approve all renewals of existing Naming Rights Sponsorships. The Advertising and Sponsorship Sales Manager is responsible for updating Council on renewals of naming rights through a Council Information Index memo.

All new Naming Rights Sponsorship agreements will require Council approval. The Advertising and Sponsorship Sales Manager is responsible for preparing a report seeking Council approval for new naming rights agreements.

#### 5.4. Donations

- a) Gifts to the Town that include a condition for naming (or where to donor receives valuable consideration in return (does not meet the definition of Donation and may be considered as a Sponsorship;
- b) Donations may be eligible for Donation Receipts for Income Tax purposes in accordance with the Income Tax Act and guidance/regulations from the Canada Revenue Agency;
- c) Should the Town wish to honour the donor with the naming of a property or property feature, after the Donation, for significant donations where a Donation Receipt has been issued by the Town, the following must be completed prior to the decision:
  - i. Community Services Staff must first obtain an independent estimate of the fair market value of the naming right to the satisfaction of the Town Treasurer;
  - ii. The Treasurer must confirm that the value of the naming right does not exceed CRA regulations for the advantage provided related to Gifts/Donations and the Town remains compliant with the Income Tax Act/CRA regulations. Currently, the threshold for consideration or advantage provided to a donor is 80%. Accordingly, if the value of the naming right provided to the donor is greater than 80% of the Donation value (and a Donation Receipt has already been issued by the Town), the Town cannot proceed with the proposed naming in honour of the donor.

**This Policy is hereby approved by Council Resolution # 83-26 on this 20th day of April 2026.**

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