**Agenda – Executive Policy Committee – September 21, 2021**

## REPORTS

**Item No. 4 Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Andrew Currie Park (River Heights-Fort Garry Ward)**

WINNIPEG PUBLIC SERVICE RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the park currently known as Andrew Currie Park not be renamed to Currie Blossom Park.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

# ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

**Title:** Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Andrew Currie Park

**Critical Path:** Executive Policy Committee – Council

## AUTHORIZATION

| Author | Department Head | CFO | CAO |
|---|---|---|---|
| C. Sveinson | M. Ruta | N/A | M. Ruta |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 30, 2020, Council passed a motion to adopt the Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History Policy. This policy was developed to guide the City in making decisions regarding requests to create new, add to, or remove/rename historical markers and place names and resolve the absence of Indigenous histories and contributions in the stories remembered and commemorated. Welcoming Winnipeg will proactively utilize a lens of balance, inclusion, and Indigenous perspectives.

As recommended in this policy, the inaugural Committee of Community Members (CCM) was established in August 2020; a key function of this committee is to review requests to change historical or place names and provide a recommendation to the Executive Policy Committee and Council for final decision.

On February 12, 2021, a formal Welcoming Winnipeg request form was unveiled to the public; a request to rename the park currently known as Andrew Currie Park (located at 1420 Wellington Crescent S) to Currie Blossom Park was submitted through this process.

The Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History policy was adopted because of a demonstrated need for changes to how the City approaches commemoration. This policy aligns at a municipal level with Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #43 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

After careful consideration, the CCM is recommending that the City does not proceed with this request. The public input received from those that opposed the renaming was evaluated carefully, given that several were related to the park's current namesake. Further, it was determined that renaming the park in this way further maintains a white-centred and colonized history of Winnipeg. The Welcoming Winnipeg definition calls for proposals to support balance, inclusion and Indigenous perspectives in the stories commemorated in the city.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the park currently known as Andrew Currie Park not be renamed to Currie Blossom Park.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

## REASON FOR THE REPORT

On January 30, 2020, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee that the recommendations of the community member-based committee be forwarded to the Executive Policy Committee and then to Council for final decision.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

If the recommendations of this report are concurred in, Andrew Currie Park will not be renamed to Currie Blossom Park.

## HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Decision-making history

In 1941, Los Angeles, California resident, Miss Blossom Parke (age 16) and her parents visited the Charlie McFayden family in Winnipeg. At this time, Mr. McFayden was involved with the Winnipeg Parks Board and thought Blossom Parke was a unique name and named the park "Blossom Park" in commemoration of good Canadian - American relations.

On November 5, 1996, the City Centre Community Committee passed a motion to refer the request that favourable consideration be given to the request to rename “Blossom Park” on Wellington Crescent between Lanark and Renfrew Streets to “Andrew Currie Park” to the Committee on Protection, Parks and Culture.

Andrew Currie was an educator, athlete and civil servant in Winnipeg; some of his contributions include:

- Served in the Second World War with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps and was awarded the Order of the British Empire;
- Director of Physical Education for Winnipeg (1951-1957) and Manitoba (1957-1961);
- Director of Parks for Greater Winnipeg (1961-1971);
- Manitoba Deputy Minister of Urban Affairs from 1971 to 1976;
- Inductee of the Canadian Football Hall of Fame (1974), Winnipeg Blue Bomber Hall of Fame (1984), and Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame (1989).

On February 10, 1997, the Committee on Protection, Parks and Culture concurred in the recommendation and the park was renamed.

On January 30, 2020, Council passed a motion to adopt the Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History Policy. This policy was developed to guide the City in making decisions regarding requests to create new, add to, or remove/rename historical markers and place names and resolve the absence of Indigenous histories and contributions in the stories remembered and commemorated. Welcoming Winnipeg will proactively utilize a lens of balance, inclusion, and Indigenous perspectives.

As recommended in this policy, the inaugural Committee of Community Members (CCM) was established in August 2020; a key function of this committee is to review requests to change historical or place names and provide a recommendation to the Executive Policy Committee and Council for final decision.

On May 8, 2020, the City Centre Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service, and approved the following:

1. That Wellington Crescent South between Academy Road and Renfrew Street, as shown on Appendix "B", be designated with the honourary street name "Blossom Boys Way" for a period not exceeding five years commencing on the date of the installation of the street sign(s) and/or sign toppers.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

On February 12, 2021, a formal Welcoming Winnipeg request form was unveiled to the public; a request to rename Andrew Currie Park (located at 1420 Wellington Crescent S) to Currie Blossom Park was submitted through this process.

<u>Considerations for this naming request</u>

The CCM reviewed the decision-making history and the information provided by the applicant (summarized in Appendix A) and then as a delegate at the committee's May 11, 2021, meeting. Additionally, the public input that was collected over a two-week period was provided to the CCM to consider as part of their recommendation-making process. An overview of the feedback collected has been included in a Public Engagement Summary Report (Appendix B).

The CCM considered how this request meets the following definition of a "Welcoming Winnipeg" request, which was created through two phases of public engagement in 2019 and was refined by the CCM. A Welcoming Winnipeg request is one that:

- Ultimately achieves a balanced perspective/story;
- Honours Indigenous peoples as the original peoples of this land and the contemporary context in which Indigenous peoples continue to have relationship with this land;
- Promotes Indigenous reclamation of land, space and/or language;
- Offers an educational opportunity; or,
- Supports telling the complete history of Winnipeg.

Utilizing the Welcoming Winnipeg Request Assessment Tool (Appendix C), the CCM identified the following as key considerations:

1. Welcoming Winnipeg

- The history of the “Blossom Boys” and their individual contributions has been documented in the media (see Appendix A), particularly in the area of sport.
- The group has been honoured with the honourary street name “Blossom Boys Way.
- There were no concerns raised with the existing name as Andrew Currie had a number of significant accomplishments and contributions in Winnipeg.

2. Research and Rationale
    - In terms of the historical significance of the park/area, being situated so close to the Assiniboine River, these lands were (and are) significant to First Nations and the Métis Nation. Furthermore, the Assiniboia Indian Residential School was located approximately 400m from the park, and is an important part of Winnipeg’s colonial legacy. The City has not yet commemorated this history with a permanent marker or place name.

3. Community Support
    - With respect to the public input received, there was opposition brought forward by individuals having interest given their relationship to the park’s current namesake and by the larger community without a direct relationship to the story.
    - The support for this renaming was overwhelmingly provided by individuals having interest given their relationship to the “Blossom Boys” and their story.

4. Other considerations
    - The Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History policy was adopted because of a demonstrated need for changes to how the City approaches commemoration.

After careful consideration, the CCM is recommending that the City does not proceed with this request. The public input received from those that opposed the renaming was evaluated carefully, given that several were related to the park’s current namesake. Further, it was determined that renaming the park in this way further maintains a white-centred and colonized history of Winnipeg. The Welcoming Winnipeg definition calls for proposals to support balance, inclusion and Indigenous perspectives in the stories commemorated in the city.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

## Financial Impact Statement **Date:** June 8, 2021

## Project Name:

Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Andrew Currie Park

**COMMENTS:**

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

*Electronically approved by F. Dela Cruz*
Fernando Dela Cruz, CPA, CGA
Acting Manager of Finance (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

## CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Parks and Open Spaces (Public Works)

## OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

**Complete Communities Direction Strategy**

Supporting Direction 1 - Conserve, protect, and celebrate the significant heritage resources that illustrate the broad range of Winnipeg's heritage values.

Supporting Direction 2 - Provide leadership in heritage conservation that links to broader civic goals of economic development, sustainability, and neighbourhood planning.

## WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

N/A

## SUBMITTED BY

Department: Chief Administrative Office
Division: Indigenous Relations
Prepared by: D. Carriere
Date: June 8, 2021
File No:

Attachments:

Appendix A: 2021-002 Request Summary

Appendix B: 2021-002 Public Engagement Summary Report

Appendix C: Welcoming Winnipeg – Request Assessment Tool