Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – November 17, 2021

REPORTS

Item No. 13 Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Skatepark West (St. James Ward)

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and recommended to Council:

1. That the park currently known as Skatepark West (located at 950 Sturgeon Road) be renamed Matt Jonsson Memorial Skatepark and that a territorial and water acknowledgment accompany the park signage.

2. That the Public Service, in consultation with the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee of Community Members (CCM), draft guidelines with respect to naming and renaming City assets (that fall within the scope of Welcoming Winnipeg) after an individual to assist the CCM's recommendation-making process, and report back for Council consideration.

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

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Gillingham,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Yea:	Bowman, Allard, Browaty, Gillingham, Gilroy, Mayes, Rollins	7
Nay:		0

Carried

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Skatepark West

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
C. Sveinson	M. Jack	N/A	M. Jack

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.

On February 12, 2021, a formal Welcoming Winnipeg request form was unveiled to the public; a request to rename the park currently known as Skatepark West (located at 950 Sturgeon Road) to Matt Jonsson Memorial Skatepark.

The Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History policy was adopted because of a demonstrated need for changes to how the City approaches commemoration and to ensure Indigenous perspectives are reflected in the City's historical markers and place names. This policy aligns at a municipal level with Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Call to Action #43. Because the proposed new name for the park does not contribute to this objective, the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee of Community Members (CCM) has requested a territorial and water acknowledgment accompany the park signage to align with Welcoming Winnipeg guiding principles:

- To honour Indigenous peoples as the original peoples of this land and the contemporary context in which Indigenous peoples continue to have relationship with this land; and,
- Provide an educational opportunity for visitors of the park to reflect on the longstanding history and relationships that have brought them to visit or reside on the land. As part of the CCM's deliberations, the importance of the skatepark's close proximity to water and the distinct relationship many Red River Métis have with the area was highlighted.

After careful consideration, the CCM is recommending that Council support this request with the addition that a territorial and water acknowledgment accompany the park signage. Furthermore, the CCM is recommending that the Public Service draft guidelines, in consultation with the committee, to assist their recommendation-making process related to requests to name or rename any City asset (that fall within the scope of Welcoming Winnipeg) after an individual.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the park currently known as Skatepark West (located at 950 Sturgeon Road) be renamed Matt Jonsson Memorial Skatepark and that a territorial and water acknowledgment accompany the park signage.

2. That the Public Service, in consultation with the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee of Community Members (CCM), draft guidelines with respect to naming and renaming City assets (that fall within the scope of Welcoming Winnipeg) after an individual to assist the CCM's recommendation-making process, and report back for Council consideration.

3. 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 (EPC) that the recommendations of the community member-based committee be forwarded to EPC and then to Council for final decision.

On June 16, 2021, EPC concurred in the recommendation of the Assiniboia Community Committee, that the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back on renaming Skatepark West to Matt Jonsson Memorial Skatepark.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

If the recommendations of this report are concurred in, the park currently known as Skatepark West (located at 950 Sturgeon Road) will be renamed Matt Jonsson Memorial Skatepark and a territorial and water acknowledgment will accompany the park signage, with costs fully funded by the applicant.

The Public Service, in consultation with the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee of Community Members (CCM), draft guidelines with respect to naming and renaming City assets (that fall within the scope of Welcoming Winnipeg) after an individual to assist the CCM's recommendation-making process

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Decision-making history

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 review requests to change historical or place names and provide a recommendation to the Executive Policy Committee (EPC) and Council for final decision.

On June 16, 2021, EPC concurred in the recommendation of the Assiniboia Community Committee, that the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back on renaming Skatepark West to Matt Jonsson Memorial Skatepark.

On February 12, 2021, a formal Welcoming Winnipeg request form was unveiled to the public; a request to rename the park currently known as Skatepark West (located at 950 Sturgeon Road) to Matt Jonsson Memorial Skatepark.

Considerations for this naming request

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 September 23, 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
    - Matt Jonsson was involved in the design of Skatepark West, and was a vital member of the tight-knit BMX community who participated in many other aspects of the St. James community.
    - The applicant of this request indicated at the September 23, 2021, CCM meeting they would also like to have a territorial land acknowledgement as part of this renaming, as they believe it is what Matt would have wanted since he was always inclusive.
2. Research and Rationale
    - The "Skatepark West" name was related to the area in which the skatepark is located and was not named for any person; therefore, it was suggested that the name change would not detract from any historical significance associated to it. The CCM also considered that the existing name is neutral/non-offensive and therefore perhaps not something requiring renaming.
    - As part of the CCM's deliberations, the importance of the skatepark's close proximity to water and the distinct relationship many Red River Métis have with the area was highlighted.

    - For instance, the site is close to Sturgeon Creek and Grant's Old Mill (the first water mill in Western Canada which was operated by Métis leader Cuthbert Grant between 1829 and about 1832).
3. Community Support
    - With respect to the public input process, in response to the question: "Do you think the Committee of Community Members should support this request", 86% of respondents to the online survey said 'yes'. There were 35 responses received.
4. Other considerations
    - This is the first renaming request to be submitted through the formal Welcoming Winnipeg process related to an individual. The CCM advised that they would like for the Public Service to draft guidelines, in consultation with the committee, to assist their recommendation-making process related to requests to name or rename any City asset (that fall within the scope of Welcoming Winnipeg) after an individual.
    - On July 18, 1979, Council adopted policy guidelines for the naming of park properties. The existing policy guidelines, as adopted by Council, are based on five generally acknowledged classifications for the derivation of site names for parks and recreation properties, which included the following:
        - "Personages: a classification commemorating individuals for philanthropy, historical prominence, political achievements, outstanding volunteer service to the City or community (particularly with reference to Parks and Recreation) or major contributions of personal time or money towards the development of a particular site".
    - These policy guidelines were affirmed by Council on September 29, 1998.
    - Evidently, these guidelines predate the Welcoming Winnipeg Policy. When drafting new guidelines, the Public Service will ensure that Welcoming Winnipeg principles are incorporated and undertake a jurisdictional scan examining what criteria or policies other municipalities in Canada have established related to naming or renaming assets after individuals.

The Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History policy was adopted because of a demonstrated need for changes to how the City approaches commemoration and to ensure Indigenous perspectives are reflected in the City's historical markers and place names. This policy aligns at a municipal level with Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Call to Action #43. Because the proposed new name for the park does not contribute to this objective, the CCM has requested a territorial and water acknowledgment accompany the park signage to align with Welcoming Winnipeg guiding principles:

- To honour Indigenous peoples as the original peoples of this land and the contemporary context in which Indigenous peoples continue to have relationship with this land; and,
- Provide an educational opportunity for visitors of the park to reflect on the longstanding history and relationships that have brought them to visit or reside on the land. As part of the CCM's deliberations, the importance of the skatepark's close proximity to water and the distinct relationship many Red River Métis have with the area was highlighted.

After careful consideration, the CCM is recommending that Council support this request with the addition that a territorial and water acknowledgment accompany the park signage. Furthermore, the CCM is recommending that the Public Service draft guidelines, in consultation with the committee, to assist their recommendation-making process related to requests to name or rename any City asset (that fall within the scope of Welcoming Winnipeg) after an individual.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement Date: November 4, 2021

Project Name:
Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Skatepark West

COMMENTS:

The financial impact of renaming Skatepark West will be determined by the cost of any signage approved for this location. If approved, the cost of signage will be fully offset by a funding contribution by the applicant, resulting in no net impact to the City. The design of this signage has not yet been determined so costs are not yet known.

Electronically approved by J. Peters
Jocelyn Peters, CPA, CGA
Manager of Finance (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Parks and Open Space (Public Works)

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Complete Communities Direction Strategy (Existing)

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.

OurWinnipeg 2045 (Subject to Council Third Reading)

5.4 Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples
Prioritize municipal implementation responsibilities within the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice. LG, ER, EP, HW, CB

5.8 Community Cohesion
Provide opportunities for creative, cultural, and artistic expression through municipal facility design, public place-making, and community-led initiatives to promote community relationship-building, identity and sense of belonging. HW, CB

5.9 Heritage Conservation
Provide opportunities for heritage education, truth-telling, and reconciliation, through the commemoration, conservation, and stewardship of both tangible and intangible heritage resources, including Indigenous land-based practices and artifacts, public names, places, and art, museum artifacts, and archived information. LG, HW

6.37 Heritage Conservation
Conserve cultural, natural, and heritage resources and districts, as defined in Complete Communities, and Indigenous land-based practices to celebrate sense of place through community history, architecture, civic identity and cultural perspectives. ER, HW

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

N/A

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Chief Administrative Office
Division: Indigenous Relations
Prepared by: D. Carriere
Date: November 8, 2021
File No: N/A

Attachments:

Appendix A: 2021-008 Request Summary

Appendix B: 2021-008 Public Engagement Summary Report

Appendix C: Welcoming Winnipeg – Request Assessment Tool