



REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: April 27, 2026

FROM: Corporate Strategy and Government Relations Department

DATE: April 14, 2026

SUBJECT: Indoor Asset Naming Procedure

LOCATION: Town-wide Page 1

WARD: Town-wide

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive the Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure, as outlined in Appendix A.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- At the March 24, 2025 Council meeting, Council directed staff to investigate, report back and prepare a draft Indoor Asset Naming Policy for Council's consideration, including exploring the approaches of others, such as municipalities and school boards.
- Various policies and procedures exist at the Town to identify the process for naming corporate assets, including the Park Naming Procedure, Street Names for Public Roads Procedure, and Naming Rights Procedure.
- The Town of Oakville's Recognition Policy identifies how to facilitate recognition of significant Town assets, achievements, milestones, events, and cultural and community service contributions.
- At the time this report was requested, there was no documented Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure. Staff have since formalized a procedure, attached as Appendix A, under the Recognition Policy. Commemorative naming in honour of individuals or organizations who have made significant contributions to the Town is not currently part of this procedure.
- This report provides options for Council's consideration to address commemorative naming, which could be incorporated into the Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure.

BACKGROUND:

At the March 24, 2025 Council meeting, Council directed staff to investigate, report back and prepare a draft Indoor Asset Naming Policy for Council's consideration, including exploring the approaches of others, such as municipalities and school boards.

The Town's existing Recognition Policy includes several procedures for naming corporate assets in recognition of significant dates, occasions and contributions of individuals, teams, organizations and businesses. It is recommended that any process for commemorative naming of indoor assets be incorporated into the Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure, rather than create a separate policy.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Various Town policies and procedures exist to address different naming scenarios for corporate assets:

1. The Naming Rights Procedure under the Corporate Grants, Sponsorship, Naming Rights and Advertising Sales Policy identifies a process and rules for naming facilities and rooms to recognize donations or sponsorship.
2. The Park Naming Procedure under the Recognition Policy identifies the process for naming and re-naming public parks and open space areas.
3. The Street Names for Public Roads Procedure under the Municipal Roads Policy identifies the process for naming public roads, including commemorative naming for streets.
4. The Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure (Appendix A), developed in response to Council direction and aligned with the Recognition Policy, identifies the process for naming and re-naming corporate facilities and rooms within facilities.

While commemorative naming is permitted in other contexts within the Town, there is currently no process to consider or permit commemorative naming of rooms and indoor spaces within corporate facilities. Council's direction is required to determine whether such naming should be permitted. Subject to Council's direction, staff have provided a draft process for inclusion within the Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure.

Staff have reviewed corporate asset naming policies and procedures across various other municipalities and jurisdictions, including school boards and post-secondary institutions, to identify best practices and lessons learned. The jurisdictional scan provided in Table 1 details the various approaches municipalities use to name indoor assets commemoratively or in recognition of individuals or organizations.

Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure

The Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure, as documented through this report, confirms the process for naming new corporate facilities. Facility naming conventions vary among municipalities but are commonly based on geographical characteristics, such as street names or neighbourhoods. This approach is the standard used in Oakville, with limited exceptions (e.g., Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre for Seniors). For municipal operating facilities, such as fire halls and works yards, it is standard practice to align the facility name with its function.

The name for new Town facilities is decided during the capital development process and presented to Council through a staff report. The Town's existing procedure only allows renaming of facilities under exceptional circumstances, such as the geographical reference of the facility changing. Requiring approval from Council or the governing body for facility naming is consistent with other municipalities and sectors.

While the first preference in municipalities is to have a geographically based facility name, other jurisdictions, such as school boards and universities, more commonly name facilities after individuals.

Indoor Asset / Room Naming

A review of municipal comparators indicates that, as a standard practice, official room names within buildings are typically based on the functional use of the space to support wayfinding and operations (e.g., Gymnasium A, Meeting Room 1). This practice may vary in circumstances where naming rights or sponsorships are approved for specific spaces.

Consistent with this common municipal approach, the Town's current practice is to maintain room names based on function. There is presently no process that permits non-financial commemorative naming of rooms or indoor spaces within Town facilities.

In jurisdictions where commemorative naming of indoor assets is permitted, it may be implemented through the use of a secondary, subordinate name that does not replace the formal functional name of the space. This approach is similar to the Town's practice for commemorative street name signs, where a commemorative designation is applied as a secondary name to the official street name.

Based on a review of practices and lessons learned at other municipalities, school boards, and post-secondary institutions, staff have developed options for Council's consideration should Council wish to permit commemorative naming of indoor assets. In most jurisdictions reviewed, commemorative naming frameworks are applied broadly across asset types. Accordingly, the jurisdictional scan presented in

Table 1 reflects commemorative naming practices generally, regardless of asset type.

Table 1 Commemorative Naming Jurisdictional Scan

Institution	Commemorative Naming Allowed	Posthumous Naming Only	Public Engagement	Approval Authority
City of Hamilton	Yes	No	Support petition and 30-day public review period	City Council
City of Mississauga	Yes	5 years posthumously	Required	City Council
City of Brampton	Yes	No	30-day public review period	City Council
City of Oshawa	Yes	2 years posthumously	30-day public review period	City Council
City of Burlington	Yes	No	Required	City Council
Town of Milton	Yes	No	Required *only for major facilities	Town Council *only for major facilities
Halton Region District School Board	Yes	No	Required	Board of Trustees
Peel Region District School Board	Yes	No	Required	Board of Trustees
Wilfrid Laurier University	Yes	No	Not required	Board of Governors
Toronto Metropolitan University	Yes	No	Not required	Board of Governors

The section below provides draft wording that may be added to the existing Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure should Council direct staff to formalize a process for commemorative naming.

Commemorative Indoor Asset Naming

Should Council choose to permit commemorative naming of indoor assets, several considerations would need to be addressed, including the:

- Process by which a member of the public may request a commemorative name;
- Circumstances under which commemorative names will be considered;

- Length of time a commemorative name would remain in effect;
- Whether commemorative names must be assigned posthumously or may be approved for living individuals;
- The extent to which public engagement would be undertaken prior to assigning a commemorative name; and
- The final approval authority for commemorative naming.

Based on best practices in other jurisdictions, it is common for any member of the public to be able to submit a commemorative name request at any time. If commemorative naming is permitted, a proposed approach is that requests be submitted to the Town Clerk who will forward the request to staff for review. Best practices across jurisdictions also indicate that commemorative naming should be reserved for individuals, groups or organizations that have made a significant positive contribution to the community and where there is a clear and logical connection between the honouree and the asset (for example, a gym named after an Olympic athlete who trained there).

Table 2 presents example options for a commemorative naming section that could be added to the Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure. The options reflect key elements that would need to be addressed in the procedure and that varied across jurisdictions reviewed but take into account lessons learned. These include the duration of commemorative naming, posthumous requirements, public engagement expectations and approval authority. The 10-year term is included as an option to balance a meaningful period of recognition with the need for appropriate, regular review.

Table 2 – Options to consider for commemorative naming of indoor assets

Option	Commemorative Naming Allowed	Time Period	Posthumous Naming Only	Public Engagement	Final Approval
1 (status quo)	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Yes	10 years	No	Required, 30-day public review	Staff
3	Yes	10 years	No	Required, 30-day public review	Town Council
4	Yes	10 years	No	Not required	Town Council

The section below provides draft wording that may be added to the Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure, should Council direct staff to formalize a process for commemorative naming. The wording currently reflects Option 2 from Table 2 but can be amended should Council select a different option. Consistent with the Town's park naming and commemorative street naming process, Option 2 identifies staff as the final approver of commemorative names.

Commemorative Room Naming

1. The Town may recognize local citizens or organizations by introducing a commemorative room name, provided it remains subordinate to the formal room name used for wayfinding and operations.
2. The formal room name (e.g., Meeting Room 1) must remain the name used on building maps, emergency plans, booking systems and directional signage. The commemorative name may appear on a secondary sign adjacent to the room entry.
3. Commemorative designations will be granted for a ten-year period, after which they may be revised, or removed.
4. Commemorative names recognize individuals, groups, or organizations that have made meaningful contributions to the community. A request for a room name should demonstrate that the proposed individual, group, or organization meets the following criteria:
 - a. Meaningful contribution to the community such as exceptional service or dedication that significantly benefited Oakville or reflecting indigenous history or heritage of the community;
 - b. Clear evidence of achievements or legacy such as outstanding in the fields of art, culture, community engagement, athletics, etc.;
 - c. Alignment with municipal values;
 - d. No reputational or ethical risk;
 - e. Logical connection to the facility.
5. The Town reserves the right to remove any commemorative name at any time, should conditions arise that makes the use of the name no longer in the best interest of the Town.
6. The approval process is as follows:
 - a. Requests must be submitted to the Town Clerk in writing and include a rationale addressing the criteria above, supporting documentation including a detailed biography of the individual, written explanation and evidence of volunteer or career achievements as they relate to the above criteria, consent from the family or next of kin, and three letters of support.
 - b. Upon receipt of a formal request, the Town Clerk will forward the request to the Director of Facility Services.
 - c. The Director of Facility Services, or their designate, reviews requests against the eligibility criteria and applicable Town policies.

- d. Where a proposed commemorative name is intended to reflect Indigenous history, language, culture, or heritage, the Town shall undertake consultation with appropriate local Indigenous Nations prior to approval.
 - e. If requests meet the criteria, the Director of Facility Services or their designate shall undertake a 30-day public engagement period to allow comments on the proposed name.
 - f. Following the 30-day public engagement period, the Director of Facility Services or their designate shall review the comments received and make the final decision regarding the proposed name.
 - g. Final approval rests with the Director of Facility Services or their designate, and if a request is not approved, staff shall engage the requester to provide details about the rationale for the decision.
7. As new commemorative names are approved, the Director of Facility Services or their designate shall provide a memo to Town Council to advise of the commemorative name.
 8. A list of commemorative names shall be maintained by the Facility Services department.

Should Council direct staff to proceed with allowing commemorative naming of indoor assets, the option selected by Council will be included in the existing procedure for Facility and Indoor Asset Naming.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

This report provides information about the Town's facility asset naming procedure and considerations for commemorative naming of indoor assets.

(B) FINANCIAL

There are no financial impacts to the current Facilities and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure. If Council chooses to permit commemorative naming, there will be a nominal financial impact from the cost of producing signage reflecting the commemorative name. The cost and volume of requests is anticipated to be low and can be managed within the Facility Services operating budget.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Should Council direct staff to proceed with including commemorative naming as part of the Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure, it will impact any department responsible for operating and maintaining facilities at the Town, including Facility Services and Recreation and Culture.

(D) COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This report addresses Council's strategic priorities: Community Belonging and Accountable Government.

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

There is no direct impact to climate change or action as a result of this report.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Facility and Indoor Asset Naming Procedure

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