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Report To: General Government Committee

Date of Meeting: September 9, 2024 **Report Number:** CAO-003-24

Authored by: Melissa Westover, Manager of Communications

Submitted By: Mary-Anne Dempster, CAO

By-law Number: **Resolution Number:**

File Number:

Report Subject: Name for New Neighbourhood Park at 3301 Middle Road

Recommendations:

1. That Report CAO-003-24, and any related delegations or communication items, be received;
2. That Council endorse Orchard East Park as the name of the new park at 3301 Middle Road in Bowmanville, based on Clarington's Park Naming Policy.
3. That Council direct staff to install a memorial bench, in a location meaningful to the family, in recognition of Spencer McCracken, a Bowmanville resident who tragically died in a traffic accident and received an outpouring of community support for memorial recognition; and that the \$3,107.50 fee for the bench be waived.
4. That all interested parties listed in Report CAO-003-24, and any delegations be advised of Council's decision.

Report Overview

This report provides an update on the ["Name Your Park"](#) campaign for the new neighbourhood park at 3301 Middle Road in Bowmanville. The park will be opening in November 2024 as approved by [FSD-028-24](#).

With an existing "Northglen Community Park" close by, an opportunity was presented to collect community ideas on this new park's name, to be brought back to Council for approval. Engagement is a key priority coming out of the Council-approved [Communications Review](#) last year, as well as an action item in the 2024-27 Strategic Plan.

The Name Your Park campaign was launched on July 26 and closed August 23, 2024. Staff have reviewed and evaluated all submissions and have chosen "**Orchard East Park**", as suggested by a community member, as the most appropriate name for the park.

Community members also submitted names of people to be honoured in the park name, which is not permitted under the Park Naming Policy. Due to the amount of support to honour late Bowmanville resident Spencer McCracken, staff recommend that a memorial bench with plaque be installed.

1. Background

Park Construction

- 1.1. At the June 3, 2024 General Government Committee, report [FSD-028-24](#) was approved, the contract award for the construction of a new park at 3301 Middle Road (fronting Northglen Boulevard) in Bowmanville.
- 1.2. Construction began in August 2024 and is set to be complete in November 2024.
- 1.3. The new neighbourhood park will feature several amenities, including: an accessible playground, large shade structure, splash pad, softball diamond, significant landscaping, benches and seating as well as paved walkways and a parking lot.
- 1.4. There is already a "Northglen Community Park" close by, so naming the new park "Northglen East Park" could cause confusion with wayfinding. This presented an opportunity to collect community ideas on a new park name through a community engagement campaign. The Park Naming Policy dictates that staff shall report to Council if any name is to be used other than the street name.
- 1.5. Clarington's current Park Naming Policy states that parks must be named after their major road or frontage, a previous historical attribute or existing natural feature.

2. Name Your Park Campaign

Community Engagement

- 2.1 A survey ran on www.Clarington.net/NameYourPark and Clarington Connected kiosks from July 26 to August 23, 2024. The survey invited residents to rank three names (as selected by staff) or submit their own idea under Clarington's current park naming policy guidelines.
- 2.2 This community engagement opportunity was promoted through a variety of tactics, including on-site signage, media and social media.
- 2.3 During the course of the campaign:
 - 3,844 people visited the Name Your Park page 4,479 times
 - 1,939 people ranked or submitted names 2,509 times

This project received a 65% participation rate, which is impressive compared to Clarington's typical participation rate of 19%. The industry standard for engagement is 2 to 12%.

- 2.4 Of the three names selected by staff, Orchard View Park received the highest votes with 73 per cent of respondents ranking it in first place. Middle Road Park received 41 per cent and Northglen Orchard Park received 28 per cent. It's worth noting there is an "Orchard View" street in a nearby neighbourhood, which could cause confusion with wayfinding.
- 2.5 The community also submitted many creative name ideas that fell within the park naming policy guidelines. Staff have reviewed and evaluated all submissions and have chosen "**Orchard East Park**" as the name for Council endorsement. This suggestion is a nod to the apple orchard the land once was and the name of the local neighbourhood. An audit of nearby roads and parks has been conducted to confirm there are no existing "Orchard East" street or park names within a 10-km radius of the new park.

Additional Naming Submissions

- 2.6 The community also put forth submissions requesting the park at 3301 Middle Road be named after various individual people, in memoriam or who made significant impacts on the community through volunteerism or acts of service.
- 2.7 There are two current policies in place that do not allow for municipal properties to be named after individuals, including Clarington's Park Naming Policy and the Naming Rights and Dedication of Municipal Facilities Policy (Attachments 1 and 2).

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- 2.8 There were a notable 1,335 submissions for the park to be named after Spencer McCracken, a Bowmanville resident who recently died in a tragic traffic collision.
- 2.9 As part of the Naming Rights and Dedication of Municipal Facilities policy, staff are developing a formal Civic Dedication and Recognition Program, in which the community can purchase memorial trees and benches in public spaces to honour an individual. Trees and benches can currently be purchased.
- 2.10 In acknowledgement of the community's support to honour the tragic death of Mr. McCracken, it is recommended that Council direct staff work with his family to dedicate a bench either in the new park or in a location that is meaningful for the family.

3. Financial Considerations

- 3.1 The approved fee for the installation of a memorial bench with plaque is \$3,107.50. Council may choose to waive this fee in recognition of the outpouring of community support for Mr. McCracken during the Name Your Park campaign.

4. Strategic Plan

- 4.1 This project supports Strategic Plan Priority L.4.1: Increase opportunities for civic engagement and public participation.

5. Climate Change

Not Applicable.

6. Concurrence

This report has been reviewed by the Deputy CAO of Planning and Infrastructure and Deputy CAO of Public Services who concur with the recommendations.

7. Conclusion

It is respectfully recommended that the recommendations in this report be approved by Council.

Staff Contact: Melissa Westover, Manager, Communications 905-623-3379 x2019 or mwestover@clarington.net.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Park Naming Policy

Attachment 2 – Policy F 16 Naming Rights and Dedication of Municipal Facilities

Interested Parties:

There are no interested parties to be notified of Council's decision.