

Staff Report

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Report To: General Government Committee

Date of Meeting: April 13, 2026

Report Number: PUB-003-26

Authored by: Mariano Perini, Director, Public Works

Submitted By: Lee-Ann Reck, Deputy CAO, Public Services

Reviewed By: Mary-Anne Dempster, CAO

By-law Number:

Resolution Number:

File Number:

Report Subject: Marie Hubbard Commemoration

Recommendation:

1. That Report PUB-003-26, and any related delegations or communications items, be received;
2. That Council approve \$12,000 to support the renaming of the Soper Creek Trail in honour of Marie Hubbard as a commemorative recognition of her service to the community;
3. That Council defer the commemorative deck option (estimated at approximately \$120,000) and direct staff not to proceed with any further work unless Council provides explicit direction through a future motion;
4. That Council direct the Deputy CAO, Finance and Technology to fund the approved option(s) from the General Municipal Reserve Fund and identify which projects need to be cancelled; and
5. That all interested parties be advised of Council's decision.

Report Overview

This report serves as an updated response to Council's direction provided at the September 8, 2025 meeting, as detailed in Report PUB-010-25, which Council approved, requesting staff to report back on the feasibility of renaming Soper Creek Park or Soper Creek Trail and the cost of constructing a commemorative deck at the Visual Arts Centre, in relation to the commemoration of Marie Hubbard, in addition to the already approved commemorative garden.

The document addresses Council's request for staff to assess the feasibility of renaming either Soper Creek Park or Soper Creek Trail, as well as the potential construction of a commemorative deck behind the Visual Arts Centre in recognition of Marie Hubbard's contributions.

Staff have taken corporate policies into account, along with the local community context, historical relevance, and associated costs, to develop a recommended approach that respectfully honours Marie Hubbard, ensures alignment with municipal guidelines, and promotes positive outcomes for the community.

1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting of September 8, 2025, Council considered Report PUB-010-25 and directed staff to report back on additional options to commemorate Marie Hubbard, including the potential renaming of Soper Creek Park or the Soper Creek Trail, and the construction of a commemorative deck at the rear of the Visual Arts Centre (VAC).
- 1.2 Marie Hubbard is widely recognized for her long-standing dedication to public service within the Municipality of Clarington and the former Mayor of the Town of Newcastle, including her leadership roles, advocacy for community development, and significant contributions to the arts.
- 1.3 Council Policy CP-21, section 5.2, restricts dedication to amenities within a municipal facility or a feature in the park. However, Council retains the authority to direct staff to override the policy where it is deemed appropriate.
- 1.4 Staff have reviewed Council's direction and evaluated commemoration options that balance policy considerations, community context, operational impacts, financial impacts and long-term sustainability.

2. Discussion

- 2.1 Staff considered renaming Soper Creek Park but decided it would disrupt its established identity and is contrary to Council Policy CP- 21. Instead, they evaluated renaming the Soper Creek Trail, which better aligns with CP-21 by naming a park amenity. The trail is more flexible for signage and improvements, connects multiple areas, and includes newer elements. Renaming the trail is less costly and operationally simpler than renaming the park.
- 2.1 Staff recognise Council's interest in building a rear deck at the Visual Arts Centre for outdoor events. The deck, to be named in honour of Marie Hubbard, would require external design and construction services. The initial estimated cost is \$120,000; reducing the deck's size or finishes could lower expenses by up to \$10,000. For the project to move forward, Building, Heritage, and Conservation Authority permits will be needed.
- 2.6 This initiative is not recommended at this time due to the prohibitive costs. Staff will continue to work with Visual Arts Clarington (VAC) to pursue alternative funding opportunities to complete the project.

3. Financial Considerations

- 3.1 The estimated cost associated with renaming the Soper Creek Trail, including the design, fabrication, and installation of new signage, is approximately \$12,000.
- 3.2 These costs are lower and more predictable than those associated with renaming Soper Creek Park, which would require broader signage changes and greater community transition considerations.
- 3.3 While staff are not recommending proceeding with the construction of a deck. If Council wishes to proceed, budget of a \$120,000 would need to be approved. Staff would continue to work with VAC to find alternative funding opportunities to offset the cost of construction.
- 3.2 As the 2026 Budget has been adopted, any projects approved through this report would require funding from the General Municipal Reserve Fund or be referred to a future budget. Council should be aware that approving funds for this commemoration may impact the delivery of planned projects in 2027 and beyond, as reserve fund resources are limited and may require reprioritization.

4. Strategic Plan

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report support Council's Strategic Plan objectives related to community pride, recognition of local leadership, and support for arts, culture, and heritage.

5. Climate Change

- 5.1 Composite decking offers environmental benefits by using recycled materials and lasting longer than pressure-treated wood. Its durability lowers greenhouse gas emissions through fewer replacements and less maintenance, making it a more sustainable option.

6. Concurrence

This report has been reviewed by the Deputy CAO/Treasurer who concur with the recommendations.

7. Conclusion

It is respectfully recommended that Council approve the recommendations within this report.

Staff Contact: Mariano Perini, Director, Public Works, 905-623-3379 x2903 or mperini@clarignton.net.

Attachments:

Not Applicable

Interested Parties:

List of Interested Parties available from Department.

1. Dionne Powlenzuk, Executive Director, Visual Arts Centre of Clarington