

To: Safety and Facilities Services Committee

From: Adam Grant, Commissioner,
Safety and Facilities Services Department

Report Number: SF-24-47

Date of Report: November 13, 2024

Date of Meeting: November 18, 2024

Subject: Oshawa Public Libraries - Request to rename Delpark Homes
Centre Branch or a future Library Branch

Ward: All Wards

File: 03-05

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to respond to Council's direction of April 25, 2022, concerning Correspondence CNCL-22-33 from Oshawa Public Libraries requesting to rename Delpark Homes Centre Branch, or a future Library Branch in honour of Ruth Brooking, Oshawa's first Librarian.

2.0 Recommendation

That the Safety and Facilities Services Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That, based on Report SF-24-47, dated November 13, 2024, the request to rename the Delpark Homes Centre Branch after Ruth Brooking be denied as the facility has already undertaken a name change from Legends Centre to Delpark Homes Centre; and,
2. That the naming rights of a future branch be considered only after all potential partnerships or sponsorships have been explored.

3.0 Input From Other Sources

The following have been consulted in preparation of this Report:

- Community and Operations Services
- Legislative Services
- Oshawa Public Library

4.0 Analysis

4.1 Background

At its meeting of April 25, 2022, Council referred Correspondence CNCL-22-33 from Oshawa Public Libraries forwarding request to rename Delpark Homes Centre Branch, or a future Library Branch in honour of Ruth Brooking, Oshawa's first Librarian to staff for a report. The request highlights Ms. Brooking's significant contributions to the Oshawa Public Library System over her extended career, which started as a clerk in 1946 and continued until her retirement as C.E.O. in 1993. Ms. Brooking was pivotal in modernizing library operations, expanding community access and leading substantial infrastructure upgrades.

In addition to her professional impact, Ms. Brooking was a dedicated community leader, serving in roles on several boards and local organizations. She received honours for her volunteerism, including the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, and was actively involved with the Rotary Club, Air Cadets, Canadian Club of Oshawa and Durham, and the Board of Directors for Parkwood Estate.

4.2 Policy Consideration

The City's current framework for naming and renaming public assets is outlined in the City Facilities Naming/Re-naming Policy (GOV-09-01), which was revised and approved by Council on April 29, 2024. The policy provides clear criteria and processes for naming or renaming a defined set of City Facilities, including:

- City-owned parks
- Naturalized areas
- City-owned buildings
- Outdoor recreation fields and courts
- Trails

The policy's stated purpose is to guide the commemoration and recognition of individuals, communities, events, or ideas that have significance to Oshawa or Canada, as well as to ensure adherence to principles of diversity and inclusion. It also sets out specific criteria for honouring Indigenous contributions and requires consultation with Indigenous communities when proposals involve names in Indigenous languages or references to Indigenous individuals or concepts.

While the Policy does identify criteria for renaming facilities, the concern in renaming the Delpark Homes Centre Branch is that the facility name has been established through a naming rights agreement and renaming it again could lead to confusion among patrons, especially since Legends Centre itself was a well-established name in the community.

Frequent renaming of public facilities can lead to confusion and potentially diminish public confidence in the facility's identity. Patrons have already adjusted to the change from Legends Centre to Delpark Homes Centre, and another change could create additional challenges for residents, particularly in wayfinding and branding consistency. Ensuring stability in facility names supports community recognition and facilitates smoother interactions for residents utilizing these services. The City aims to balance community commemorations with operational practicality, and stability in facility naming is part of maintaining this balance.

Consistency in facility naming is crucial to maintaining public clarity, and frequent renaming can diminish the perceived stability and identity of such community landmarks.

4.3 Preservation of Naming Rights and Potential Partnerships

One of the strategic considerations within the City's policy is the preservation of naming rights for future opportunities, particularly when there is a potential for partnerships that could bring financial benefits. By retaining the naming rights of the Delpark Homes Centre, the City remains open to engaging with future sponsors or donors who may wish to invest in the facility. Naming rights can be a valuable asset for municipalities, especially in cases where a significant contribution can fund enhancements or community initiatives.

In alignment with the City's Strategic Plan priorities of Lead: Governance and Service Excellence Sustainable Fiscal Management, maintaining flexibility with naming rights is prudent. Should a major donor express interest in naming a library branch, this flexibility may lead to financial contributions that would support the library's operational objectives, benefit the wider community, and strengthen the library's long-term sustainability.

This preservation of naming rights extends to future branches of the Oshawa Public Library located within a City facility that may have the potential for sponsorship as well. When a new branch of the Library is planned to be established, naming the branch to honour Ms. Brooking may be considered after all other possible partnerships or facility sponsorships have been explored.

4.4 Alternative Opportunities for Recognition

In lieu of renaming the branch at the Delpark Homes Centre or naming a future branch, City Staff in collaboration with Oshawa Public Libraries staff could explore opportunities to honour Ms. Brooking in a way that celebrates her contributions while preserving the facility's identity. As an alternative, consideration could be given to installation of a memorial plaque or display. Installing a dedicated plaque within any branch within the Oshawa Public Libraries would commemorate Ms. Brooking's achievements, honouring her legacy and influence within the library system, while ensuring her contributions are recognized by library visitors.

5.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

6.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan

This report responds to the Oshawa Strategic Plan Priority Area “Lead: Governance and Service Excellence” with the goal to enhance effective communication and encourage all community members to actively participate and learn about City services, programs, and spaces.



Randy Garey, Director,
Facilities Management Services



Adam Grant, Commissioner,
Safety and Facilities Services Department