



City Council Meeting
Commemoration Framework
May 5, 2026

Commemoration Framework Purpose

The proposed Commemoration Framework (“**Framework**”) guides the commemoration of communities, people, places, events and ideas, in City of Vancouver (“**City**”) owned and operated spaces and assets.

- Standardized approach to guide who and what is commemorated in the limited City of Vancouver (“**City**”) owned and operated spaces and assets
- Encourage Commemorations to reflect meaningful, unique and significant local circumstances
- Establishes roles and accountabilities for intake, review and decision-making processes

Background

- **Commemoration:** the act of acknowledging the memory of communities, people, places, events and ideas
- **Takes many forms:** proclamations, monuments, public art, plaques, honorary street names and places of remembrance
- **No current policy:** ad-hoc approach, inconsistent internal processes, lack of public understanding, potential for unintended harm
- **Limited City owned and operated public space available:** need to be selective when assessing applications



Gertrude Guerin Plaza



Terry Fox Memorial, photo: Ross, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



Guru Nanak Jahaz Place, photo: City of Vancouver

Framework Scope

In scope

- New and honorary commemorations for City streets, laneways, buildings, plazas, and other assets
- Developing, acquiring or deaccessioning commemorative civic monuments, public art and plaques
- Commemorative protocols including official celebrations and observances

Out of scope

- Indigenous naming
- Temporary and community activations
 - i.e. roadside memorials, half-masting, memorial murals
- Land and assets not wholly controlled by the City
 - lessees of City properties, private streets and land

Five Assessment Criteria

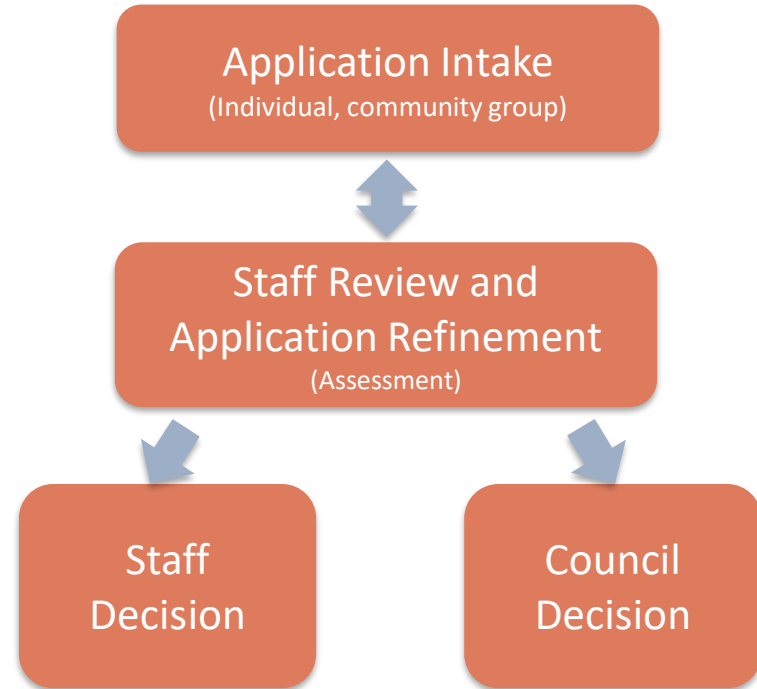
Not all criteria need to be met for an Application to proceed, local relevance is required:

1. **Is locally relevant**, grounded in and connected to Vancouver (Required);
2. **Holds broad community interest and support**, prioritizing significant events, and groups, with individuals being commemorated only in exceptional circumstances;
3. **Recognizes Vancouver's diverse communities and history and advances UNDRIP priorities**, grounded in historical research, documented stories, community insights, Indigenous Traditional Knowledge, and/or advances equitable representation from communities that have been historically underrepresented;
4. **Has a minimum of a two-year waiting period** from the time of a person's passing or the occurrence of an event and the proposed commemoration; and
5. **Is feasible and sustainable**, supported by an applicant-developed whole-life funding strategy, and considerate of the City's operational needs and limited public assets and spaces.

Process Overview

Varies depending on the scale,
nature, complexity, and location

Centrally coordinated, standardized,
and flexible



Decision-Making Authorities

- Staff would have delegated authority to:
 - Approve fully-funded, temporary plaques up to 10 years where there is strong alignment to the Assessment Criteria
 - Decline proposals where Assessment Criteria not adequately met
- Council approval would be sought for all other proposals:
 - i.e. those requiring material allocation of resources or City space / asset such as a new monument or public art, naming
- Staff would support Council decision-making:
 - Provide staff recommendation based on Assessment Criteria
 - Use existing Council processes where applicable (i.e. area plan, rezoning)
 - Consolidated Council reports (6 monthly)

Implementation by Q4, 2026

- **Seek Council direction:** May 5, 2026
- **Subject to Council decision:**
 - **Develop Public Facing Resources:** To support public access and awareness including a landing page on the City's website, and internal resources and systems to support implementation
 - **Review On-Hold Applications:** Connect with applicants, assess and progress on-hold applications once procedures are in place
- **Four-yearly cycle** to seek Council direction to reaffirm or amend the Framework. Can update ad-hoc as Council directed

Staff recommendation:

- A. THAT Council approve the City of Vancouver Commemoration Framework (“Framework”) attached as Appendix A to this report and direct staff to develop internal guidelines and public-facing resources to implement the Framework by Q4 2026.
- B. THAT Council delegate the following authorities to City staff:
 - i. the General Manager of the lead Department (typically the Department that owns the applicable asset) may decline Applications where the Assessment Criteria (as defined in Appendix A) are not adequately met, and
 - ii. the General Manager of the lead Department (typically the Department that owns the applicable asset) may approve Applications (as defined in Appendix A) for fully funded, temporary plaques that will be displayed for up to 10 years and that demonstrate a strong alignment to the Assessment Criteria.