

**THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF SARNIA**  
**People Serving People**

**PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

**OPEN SESSION REPORT**

TO: Members of Sarnia City Council

FROM: Rob Harwood, Director of Parks and Recreation

DATE: July 16, 2018

SUBJECT: Commemorative Bench and Commemorative Tree & Forest Policy and Procedures - Adoption

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**Recommendation:**

It is recommended:

1. That Sarnia City Council adopts the Commemorative Bench and Commemorative Tree & Forest Policies and Procedures document; and
2. That Sarnia City Council adopts the amendment to the Fees for Service By-Law Number 136 of 2017.

**Background:**

Each year the City of Sarnia Parks and Recreation Department receive many requests from individuals, groups and organizations wishing to purchase a commemorative bench and or tree to be placed on municipal parkland including the waterfront and along the Howard Watson Nature Trail.

The document will provide the foundation for a proactive citizen-friendly approach in encouraging the commemoration and purchase of benches and or trees. This document will improve financial sustainability and provide clear and consistent guidelines into one document providing clarity to both staff and citizens. Guidelines established will address the purchase, allocation, management, maintenance and lifecycle of both benches and trees that benefit the City of Sarnia and its citizens.

Following the Sarnia City Council report of May 28, 2018 when the draft policy and the draft fees for service by-law amendment were provided to Council, notice of the proposed policy was issued and the policy posted to the City's website for review. No comments were received.

**Comments:**

The policy document is in keeping with the Responsible Financial Management priority of the corporate Strategic Plan. Adjustments to the program as identified in the policy document will mitigate loss and establish a self-funded program with full cost recovery and as such an amendment to the Fees for Service By-Law was required to permit the proposed fees for the purchase and installation of the benches and the purchase and planting of a tree.

**Consultation:**

The following departments were consulted:

- Parks and Recreation, Clerks, Accessibility Coordinator, Age Friendly – Outdoor Buildings and Spaces, Bluewater Trails Committee.

**Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications to this report. This program is to operate on a full cost recovery basis.

Reviewed by:



Rob Harwood  
Director of Parks and Recreation

Approved by:



Margaret Misek-Evans  
Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared by Ryan Chamney, Manager of Recreation and Planning.

Attachments: Commemorative Bench and Commemorative Tree & Forest Policies and Procedures  
Application Form



# Commemorative Bench and Commemorative Tree & Forest Program Policies and Procedures

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Prepared by: City of Sarnia, the Parks & Recreation Department

July 16, 2018

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## **Policy Statement**

The primary objective of the Policy is to provide the parameters and guidelines for citizens to participate in a Commemorative Bench and/or Commemorative Tree & Forest Program within the City's green spaces including parks, waterfront and trails. This policy will provide appropriate oversight and understanding of administration and maintenance responsibilities to preserve the City's parks, waterfront and trails.

The City of Sarnia, through its Parks & Recreation Department and Bluewater Trails Committee, administers and supports a municipal commemorative bench and tree program.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the policy is to outline the terms and conditions that allow for the provision of commemorative park benches and commemorative trees for the citizens of Sarnia. Such installations are provided at the cost of the individual. Responsibility for maintenance of the items, within specific parameters, is provided by the City as identified in this policy.

## **Scope**

The policy applies to bench and tree commemorations within parks, open spaces, waterfront and trails owned and managed by the City of Sarnia and as approved by the Parks and Recreation Department and when applicable the Bluewater Trails Committee. The existing Bluewater Trails Committee Commemorative Bench program, the existing Park and Waterfront Bench program and the existing Tree Donation program, fall under the parameters of the policies and procedures as identified in this document. The Commemorative Forest program, as identified in Schedule 'A' of this document is a new program that also will fall under the parameters of the policies and procedures as identified in this document

## **General Guidelines**

To protect park resources, values and the park visitor experience, bench and tree donations shall respect the Commemorative Parks Bench and Commemorative Tree & Forest Program, as well as the priorities, purpose and integrity of the City parks, waterfront and trails. Park bench and tree donations shall contribute to the visitor experience, increase public enjoyment and preserve the visual character of the park, waterfront and or trail setting.

Limitations to the sites for park benches and trees are provided in recognition of the fact that such installations can interfere with active sport facilities, design parameters, affect the growth habit of trees and interfere with maintenance operations.

Items purchased, installed or planted under this policy will become property of the City.

### **Term/Agreement:**

Benches in an outdoor setting have a reasonable life span of 15 years. The dedicated bench term will be for a period of 15 years. The fee covers the acquisition and installation of the bench, plaque with inscription, and general maintenance and repair during its useful life. Within this time, the Parks and Recreation Department will replace the park bench if deemed necessary by the department. The City will not be responsible for damaged or vandalized plaques. In the event of severe bench vandalism, the plaque will be installed on another bench. The City reserves the right to relocate the bench if unforeseen circumstances arise due to its location or setting. Trees will be replaced within the first two years if the tree is not established.

### **Renewal:**

After initial 15 year term is completed, applicant will have the option to renew for an additional 15 years at the current cost of a new bench. Tree donations will not require a renewal.

## **Procedures**

The following guidelines and procedures apply when purchasing a Commemorative Park Bench and or Commemorative Tree:

### **Application Process:**

- Citizens wishing to participate in the Commemorative Park Bench and or Commemorative Tree & Forest Program may do so by completing an application form available on-line at the [City of Sarnia website](#).
  - Benches: Applications received annually between September and April will be installed in June as weather permits. Applications received between May and August will be installed in October as weather permits;
  - Trees: Plantings are completed in the spring and in the fall annually. Requests for spring plantings must be received by March 1<sup>st</sup> and requests for fall planting by August 1<sup>st</sup>;
  - Applications will be received and reviewed by the Manager of Recreation and Planning and or designate;
  - Applications that request a Howard Watson Nature Trail bench will be reviewed by the Manager of Recreation and Planning or designate and reviewed and approved by the Bluewater Trails Committee.

**Bench Donation:** There are two types of benches available through this program. All benches will be installed by the Parks and Recreation Department:

- Waterfront & Park - Signature Commemorative Bench;
- Howard Watson Nature Trail (HWNT) and Park - Commemorative Bench;

- Requests will be approved by both the Bluewater Trails Committee (on HWNT requests) and the Parks and Recreation Department;

Bench Type:



**Figure 1 Waterfront & Park - Signature Commemorative Bench**



**Figure 2 Howard Watson Nature Trail and Park Commemorative Bench**

Tree Donation: There are two types of Tree Donations available through this program:



- Park Commemorative Tree donation:
  - Donation and planting of a tree within a specific Park or Trail;
  - No Plaque permitted;
- Commemorative Forest donation: See Schedule 'A'
  - Donation and planting of a tree within designated Commemorative Forest in Heritage Park;
  - Plaque will be displayed on the Commemorative Forest sign.

Parks and Recreation staff will assist applicants in determining a choice of native or non-native tree that is best suited for the requested location.

Should the tree establish itself in the first two years, the tree shall be replaced by the Parks & Recreation Department.

Plaque & Text:

The City will procure and install a 4" x 6" sized metal plaque on each bench at the request of the donor.

- Message template is part of the application form;
- In general, message shall adhere to the Advertising & Sponsorship Policy; [City of Sarnia website](#) and will not be permitted if it:
  - Detracts from the image of the City;
  - May be considered discriminatory, derogatory or offensive;
- Design specifications and message request will be approved at the discretion of the Manager of Recreation and Planning or Designate;
- There are no plaques for commemorative tree donations within parks or along the trail;
- There are plaques for tree donations as part of the Commemorative Forest program.

Fees and Maintenance:

The donor shall pay in advance the full cost to purchase, supply, deliver and install the bench, tree and plaque including the necessary concrete surface and or installation work required for the bench as agreed upon through the application process. A donation receipt will be provided.

- Waterfront & Park Signature Commemorative Bench with plaque installed on a cement pad as per installation requirements at a cost outlined in Schedule 'B';
- HWNT and Park Commemorative Bench with plaque installed at a cost outlined in Schedule 'B';
  - a. HWNT benches – a portion of the fee may go directly to the Bluewater Trails committee;
- Commemorative Tree planted at a cost outlined in Schedule 'B';
- Payment is due at the time application is submitted;
- Fees as identified in Schedule 'B' will be included in the Fees for Service book approved annually by Sarnia City Council. Fees may be updated from time to time;
- Nothing herein shall prevent the immediate removal of any item deemed by staff to constitute an immediate safety concern;
- Should the parkland containing benches and or trees be altered, the City shall make its best efforts to relocate within the property;
- Due to concerns for risk management, maintaining quality and safety of product and installation, substitution of other providers, bench options or do-it-yourself work shall not be permitted.

Location Consideration:

While the donor may suggest the proposed location, certain requirements shall apply as noted below. The appropriate member of the Parks & Recreation Department shall make the final and precise determination of location, with consideration for the criteria below:

- The location does not interfere with any active park facility;

- The location would be considered appropriate in accordance with design criteria related to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED);
- The location does not interfere with approved park design including horticultural or arboricultural components or displays;
- The location does not interfere with maintenance including access for maintenance requirements;
- Benches shall be spaced 350 metres apart along the HWNT when possible and or installed at a Trail Gateway;
- Impacts on other properties are considered including views from surrounding properties.

Installation:

The City shall be responsible for the installation of the commemorative item.

- Benches and Trees: Installations are seasonal and are completed as weather and ground conditions permit under the timelines as identified in this policy;
- Installation and plantings will be processed in the order received;
- A site visit to determine precise location will be arranged by Parks and Recreation staff with the donor prior to installation;
- The City understands that the bench and or tree may have sentimental value, however, it is not to be considered a memorial or shrine. For that reason, the City respectfully advises that the placement of flowers, commemorative stones, wreaths, pictures, etc. at the site is not permitted.

Accessibility Requirements:

Benches as outlined in Figure 1 and Figure 2 will meet the standards outlined by the Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (AODA) and within reason follow the City of Sarnia Accessible Design Standards for Benches.

### Monetary Donation:

Nothing in this policy shall limit the ability of any individual, organization or corporation to make a monetary donation to the City for the purpose of tree planting or the provision of benches to be utilized at the discretion of the City or to be held in a reserve for future replacement of benches and trees.

### **Administration of Policy and Program:**

- The Parks and Recreation Director and or designate shall implement and ensure compliance with this policy;
- This Program Policies and Procedures shall be reviewed from time to time;
- Fees will be reviewed annually during the budget process.

### **Schedule 'A' – Commemorative Forest Program**

The City of Sarnia Commemorative Forest is a special forest growing in Heritage Park. All trees purchased through the Commemorative Forest program shall be planted within the designated Commemorative Forest area and at the discretion of Park staff. Heritage Park currently is home to the Veterans Memorial Forest as well.

The planting of trees to commemorate major life events is a ritual that has been performed for centuries. This everlasting celebration provides the opportunity to commemorate the life of a loved one through a lasting tribute of a tree while also creating a healthy, natural landscape assuring a better environment for years to come.

As the trees grow strong and tall; people can continually take both pleasure and comfort in their presence. By giving the gift of life through the planting of a tree, the memory of a loved one can live on forever.

A permanent record of all donations, and the people they commemorate, is kept in a memorial register located at Sarnia City Hall, Parks and Recreation Office.

A permanent sign is erected at the entrance to the Commemorative Forest. The sign will provide the opportunity for those trees purchased through the Commemorative Forest Program space to display a plaque commemoration recognizing the donation.

The application form included in this document shall also be used for the Commemorative Forest Program.

The Commemorative Forest Program shall adhere to the applicable policies and procedures as identified in this policy document.

**Schedule 'B' – Fees**

Commemorative Item	Fee (including installation and or Planting)
Waterfront and Parks Signature Commemorative Bench	\$2000
Parks Commemorative Bench	\$1500
Bluewater Trails Howard Watson Nature Trails Bench	\$1500
Commemorative Tree	\$300
Commemorative Forest Program	\$300

# Commemorative Bench, Tree & Forest Program

## Applicant Information

First Name		Last Name	
Street Number	Street Name		Suite/Unit Number
City		Province	Postal Code
Telephone Number	Mobile Number	Email	

## Location

While the donor may suggest the proposed location, certain requirements shall apply. Please refer to the Commemorative Bench, Tree & Forest Program Policies and Procedures document at [www.sarnia.ca](http://www.sarnia.ca)

Name of Preferred Location (1<sup>st</sup> Choice)

Name of Preferred Location (2<sup>nd</sup> Choice)

## Request for Tree/Bench:

Request (please check appropriate box)

- Waterfront and Parks - Signature Commemorative Bench.....\$2,000.00
- Parks - Commemorative Bench.....\$1,500.00
- Bluewater Trails Howard Watson Nature Trail - Bench.....\$1,500.00
- Commemorative Tree.....\$300.00
- Commemorative Forest Program - Tree.....\$300.00

## Tree Choice and Installations Timeline

Parks and Recreation staff will assist citizens in determining a choice of a native or non-native tree that is best suited for the requested location.

### Tree Plantings

Plantings are completed in the spring and in the fall annually.  
 Requests for spring plantings must be received by March 1st.  
 Requests for fall plantings must be received by August 1st.

### Bench Installations

Applications received annually between September and April will be installed in June (weather permitting).  
 Applications received annually between May and August will be installed in October (weather permitting).



## Commemorative Bench, Tree & Forest Program

### Plaque Wording

Wording is to consist of no more than 120 characters. You must include spaces and punctuation as part of the allowed characters per line. Wording will be centred on the plaque and the layout will be at the City's discretion. Plaques are 4" x 6" in size. Messages will not be permitted if it detracts from the image of the City, indicates political affiliation, and/or may be considered discriminatory, derogatory, or offensive. Trees do not include plaques, unless part of the Commemorative Forest Program. To assist you, common phrases include "In Loving Memory of" or "In Tribute To" or "To Commemorate."

### Payment Information

Payment can be made on-line at the ActiveNet Registration portal.

Payment and Application can also be submitted to the Parks & Recreation Office at Sarnia City Hall.

Parks & Recreation – Commemorative Bench, Tree & Forest Program

255 Christina Street North

PO Box 3018

Sarnia, ON N7T 7N2

For more information call Parks & Recreation (519) 332-0330 ext.3214 or email [parksandrecreation@sarnia.ca](mailto:parksandrecreation@sarnia.ca).

The Commemorative Bench, Tree & Forest Policies and Procedures document outlines the terms and conditions that allow for the provision of commemorative park benches & plaques and commemorative trees.

Payment Received (due with application):  Y/N

I Would like a Tax Receipt?  Yes  No

I have read the Commemorative Bench, Tree & Forest Program Policies & Procedures and Agree with Terms/Conditions.  Yes  No

Signature

Date (yyyy-mm-dd)

### For Office Use Only

Approved: Initials _____	Installation Intake: _____	Date Received: _____	Plaque Ordered Date: _____
Approved: Park Staff Initials _____	Site Meeting: _____	Location Determined: Y__ N__	Date Installed: _____