



Civic Addressing Bylaw – 5 Year Review 2024

Planning & Development Department

Planning Advisory Committee

January 21, 2025



EAST HANTS



Summary

- As part of the 5 year review of the Civic Addressing Bylaw (P-800) staff have reviewed Schedule A of the bylaw and have recommended amendments.
- Schedule A of the Civic Addressing Bylaw contains general principles and guidelines for the Civic Addressing Coordinator to determine what is an acceptable public street or private road name.
- Staff recommend amendments to Schedule A to provide additional criteria that would prevent an offensive or distasteful name from being approved. As well as guidelines that align with Parks, Recreation & Culture's Parks Naming Policy.
- First reading of amended Bylaw P-800 was given at the December meeting of Council.



Summary Cont.

- At the December 2024 meeting of the Planning Advisory Committee, concern was expressed regarding guideline A3 in schedule A that restricts the use of special characters and punctuation in road names. Committee members were concerned that the guideline may prevent some French/Acadian or Mi'kmaq names from being accepted.
- Motion C24(445) was moved that directed staff to correspond with the Province on section A3 of the Bylaw with regards to Mi'kmaq and Acadian (as well as any other naming) of provincial roads.
- Following that discussion with the province and further research, staff recommend giving first reading again as there are additional proposed amendments relating to the use of special characters and appealing of a road name rejection.



Discussion

- The current Schedule A of the Civic Addressing Bylaw contains the following Guidelines for naming public streets and private roads:
- A1. No name shall be duplicated including similar names that are differentiated by street type.
- A2. No street name shall sound like an existing name.
- A3. No street name shall contain numbers, special characters, decimals, hyphens, apostrophes, periods, or punctuations of any kind.
- A4. No street names shall incorporate product, trademark or copyright names.
- A5. Street names should be limited to 24 characters.



Discussion Cont.

- There are no guidelines included in schedule A that the name of a public street or private road should be inoffensive to the public.
- Without an amendment, there is no mechanism to reject a submitted name that may be considered to be inappropriate.
- Staff have not been in a position where a name that could be viewed as inappropriate has been submitted for consideration.
- The amendment is recommended in order to mitigate the possibility of such a situation.



Discussion Cont.

- Staff recommend an additional guideline as well as an amendment to an existing guideline in Schedule A.
- The new guideline will not allow a public street or private road name to be a combination of a given name and surname without the consent of Council.
- Following the discussion of special characters at PAC in December, staff also recommend that guideline A3 be amended to allow special characters and punctuation in public street and private road names at the discretion of the Civic Addressing Coordinator.
- This new guideline and amendment of guideline A3 will align Schedule A with Parks, Recreation & Culture's Park Naming Policy sections 4.3 and 4.6.



Discussion Cont.

- Staff have recognized there is no process laid out in the Civic Addressing Bylaw that would allow for an appeal of a rejected road name. Staff recommend a subsection be added to Section 7 of the Civic Addressing Bylaw which pertains to public street and private road naming. This new section will allow a written appeal to be submitted to Council if a street name has been rejected by the Civic Addressing Coordinator.



Jurisdictional Scan

- There are several approaches that municipalities take in regard to regulating the naming of public streets and private roads re: social acceptability.
- In some policies, there is no requirement that the proposed street name be “in good taste” or free of offensive language.
- The provincial road naming policy as well as Pictou County and Antigonish County road naming policies include the guideline that a submitted name must be “in good taste”.
- The Municipality of the District of Yarmouth’s Street Naming Policy includes the guideline “not to be offensive to the public and/or pose a safety concern”.



Jurisdictional Scan Cont.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's Municipal Street Naming policy goes into greater detail. Their policy section "Names to Avoid" has the following criteria:

1. Names that could be construed as advertising a particular business; and,
 2. Cumbersome, corrupted, modified names, discriminatory or derogatory names from the point of view of race, sex, colour, creed, political affiliation or other social factors; and,
 3. Names with any sexual overtones, inappropriate humour, parody, slang or double meaning; and
 4. Names that have a secondary negative or offensive connotation
- Staff recommend an amendment to the bylaw that falls between the guideline for a name to simply be "in good taste" and the detail of Niagara-on-the-Lake's policy would be appropriate.



Jurisdictional Scan - Special Characters.

- Section 4.2 of the provincial road naming policy addresses the use of special characters. The section reads “*Names submitted with special characters (ie. hyphen, genitive apostrophe, etc) will be accepted only if the special characters are found in a subset of the extended ASCII character set. This subset does not include stylized symbols such as #, %, etc.*”
- Staff have communicated with the Department of Public Works regarding this policy.
- Public Works staff have indicated they review road names with special characters on a case-by-case basis.
- In some systems such as databases or mapping software, special characters may not be compatible and will restrict functionality. The Department recommends using road names without special characters for this reason.
- The Department has made allowances for some road names, and have no record of rejecting a name due to a special character.



Jurisdictional Scan Cont.

- Parks, Recreation & Culture’s Park Naming Policy also has a section regarding the use of special characters, and of given names and surnames for use as park names.
- Section 4.3 of the Parks Naming Policy mirrors section A3 of Schedule A. It includes an additional statement recognizing that restricting the use of special characters and punctuation “precludes the use of many Mi’kmaq names”.
- The Parks Naming Policy allows the use of special characters at the discretion of Parks, Recreation & Culture staff.
- Where the Department of Public Works reviews road names with special characters on a case-by-case basis and are therefore approved at the discretion of Department staff as well, Municipal staff recommend language that borrows from the provincial road naming policy.



Proposed Amendments.

The amendment proposed is to add the text shown below:

- A1. No name shall be duplicated including similar names that are differentiated by street type.
- A2. No street name shall sound like an existing name.
- **A3.** No street name shall contain numbers, special characters, decimals, hyphens, apostrophes, periods, or punctuations of any kind. **Special characters and/or punctuation found in a subset of the extended ASCII character set may be accepted at the discretion of the Civic Addressing Coordinator.**
- A4. No street names shall incorporate product, trademark or copyright names.
- A5. Street names should be limited to 24 characters.
- **A6.** No street name shall be discriminatory, derogatory, or have a negative or offensive connotation.
- **A7.** No street name shall be a personal name such as a combination of given name and surname without the consent of Council.



Discussion Cont.

- Staff also noted an error in subsection 8.1.c of the Civic Addressing Bylaw, where it references subsection 8.1.2. This subsection does not exist and should be notated as subsection 8.1.b.

Proposed subsection 7.8

7.8 - Where the Civic Addressing Coordinator has rejected a street name a written appeal may be submitted to the Municipal Clerk within 7 days of the rejection. The appellant will then be given notice of the date and time of when the appeal will be heard by Council.



Alternative Option

- If Planning Advisory Committee does not support the additional changes outlined in this report which include the use of special characters and the appealing of a rejected road name, the original version of the amended bylaw which was given first reading in December will be added to the Council agenda this month to be considered for second reading.



Conclusion

- Staff propose amendments to Schedule A of the Civic Addressing Bylaw.
- The amendments will provide additional criteria for the Civic Addressing Coordinator in determining whether to accept or reject a proposed public street or private road name, and to prevent an offensive name from being approved.
- The amendment will also align the Civic Addressing Bylaw's naming guidelines with Parks, Recreation & Culture's guidelines for naming public parks in relation to the use of special characters, as well as given names and surnames.
- Staff also propose a housekeeping amendment to section 8.1.c and an amendment regarding the appeal of a rejected street name.
- Due to changes relating to the use of special characters staff are recommending first reading be given again to the amendments to the Civic Addressing Bylaw.



Recommendation

That first reading be given to Bylaw P-800-2 Civic Addressing Bylaw, a bylaw to amend Bylaw P-800 Civic Addressing Bylaw.

Recommended Motions

The Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Council that Council:

- Give first reading to Bylaw P-800-2, a bylaw to amend Bylaw P-800 Civic Addressing Bylaw