

Staff Report

Presented By: Ruhul Amin, Manager, Engineering Services
Meeting Date: August 11, 2025
Subject: Final Design for the Southampton Cenotaph Upgrade Project
Attachment(s): Consultant's Presentation

Recommendation

That Council approve the Final Design for the Southampton Cenotaph Upgrade Project.

Report Summary

The Cenotaph Ad Hoc Committee recommended that Council approve Option 1 from the R.J. Burnside report, which enhances the High and Huron Street intersection to honour veterans of Southampton and Saugeen First Nation. While the recommendation proposed one memorial wall, Burnside now recommends two - on the southwest and northwest corners - to accommodate all commemorated names.

Background/Analysis

On December 16, 2024, Council approved the creation of a Cenotaph Ad Hoc Committee, with the primary objective of reviewing the four revitalization options presented in the R.J. Burnside report and providing Council with a formal recommendation for the enhancement of the Southampton Cenotaph area. On March 19, 2025, the Cenotaph Ad Hoc Committee presented the following recommendations to Council:

1. That Option 1 from the R.J. Burnside report be approved, incorporating design elements at the intersection of High Street and Huron Street to further honour veterans from Southampton and Saugeen First Nation, including a proposed memorial wall on the curb extensions.
2. That the existing Cairn and Cross be restored and maintained as part of the revitalization.
3. That the landscaping on the traffic island be rejuvenated to improve aesthetics and accessibility.
4. That the Mosquito Bomber Interpretive Plaque, currently located in George Marion Park, be relocated to a position closer to the Cenotaph; and
5. That benches and a duplicate of the Women in Military Interpretive Plaque be installed on the curb extensions at the intersection adjacent to the Southampton Cenotaph.

To determine the appropriate size and design for the proposed memorial wall, the Town and R.J. Burnside staff consulted with the Royal Canadian Legion, Southampton Branch, to confirm the number of veterans to be honoured from both Southampton and Saugeen First Nation. The Legion advised that total 400-440 names should be included.

Given the number of names and the available surface area, R.J. Burnside has recommended the installation of two memorial walls: one on the southwest corner; and one on the northwest corner of the High Street and Huron Street intersection. It is also noted that names would need to be engraved on both the front and back faces of each wall.

Jarvis Clandfield, Landscape Designer at R.J. Burnside will present the design for Council's consideration.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The recommendations presented by the Cenotaph Ad Hoc Committee reflect a thoughtful and collaborative effort to honour the veterans of Southampton and Saugeen First Nation through meaningful enhancements to the Cenotaph area. The revised design proposal, including the installation of two memorial walls, ensures that all names can be appropriately commemorated within the available space. Council's consideration and approval of the final concepts will allow the project to move forward, ensuring that the revitalized site serves as a respectful and lasting tribute to those who served.

These enhancements will meaningfully preserve and elevate the legacy of local veterans, creating a dignified and accessible public space for remembrance and reflection.

Recommendation:

That Council approve the Final Design for the Southampton Cenotaph Upgrade Project which includes:

- Option 1 from the R.J. Burnside report, including enhancements to the High and Huron Street intersection.
- Two memorial walls to honour veterans from Southampton and Saugeen First Nation.
- Restoration of the Cairn and Cross.
- Landscaping improvements to the traffic island.
- Relocation of the Mosquito Bomber Interpretive Plaque closer to the Cenotaph.
- Installation of benches and a duplicate Women in Military Interpretive Plaque.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 4: Fostering a Vibrant Place to Live and Visit
- Business Plan Alignment: Corporate Services Division Highlight

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

Costs associated with this program are contained within the existing budget.

Prepared By: Ruhul Amin, Manager, Engineering Services

Reviewed By: Mark Paoli, Director, Development Services

Approved By: Kara Van Myall, Chief Administrative Officer