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Date	October 14, 2025
To	Council – November 5, 2025
From	Susie Wray, Manager of Parks and Recreation
Report No.	REC 08-25
Report Title	Commemorative Policy

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## **Recommendation**

**That Report REC 08-25 entitled Commemorative Policy be received for information; and,**

**That Council approve the attached Commemorative Policy to replace Section 8.0 – In Memoriam Requests in By-law 66-23: Tree Management Policy.**

## **Executive Summary**

The proposed Commemorative Policy provides a clear and transparent framework for individuals or organizations wishing to commemorate a person, group, or event through the placement of benches or trees within Town parks, trails, and open spaces.

This policy replaces Section 8.0 of the Town of Aylmer Tree Management Policy (By-law 66-23) to establish an updated and standalone program that aligns with accessibility, design, and sustainability standards outlined in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2023).

The Commemorative Program ensures consistency, equitable placement, and the long-term maintenance of benches and trees funded by donors, while preserving the visual and functional integrity of municipal green spaces.

## Background

Historically, requests for commemorative installations have been managed under Section 8.0 of the Tree Management Policy, which broadly outlined in memoriam procedures. As community interest in commemorative benches and trees has grown, a more comprehensive and transparent process became necessary.

The proposed Commemorative Policy consolidates procedures for applications, fees, installation, and maintenance, while ensuring accessibility and alignment with the Town's User Fees By-law and AODA standards.

Key improvements include:

- Defined 10-year maintenance term and warranty;
- Standardized design specifications for benches and plaques;
- Clear application process and fee structure;
- Integration of accessibility and CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) considerations;
- Inclusion of native Carolinian tree species in alignment with By-law 66-23.

## Analysis

The Commemorative Policy supports the Town's ongoing efforts to create welcoming, inclusive, and well-maintained public spaces.

### **Connections to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP):**

The PRMP identifies the importance of quality park infrastructure, accessibility, and commemorative opportunities that foster civic pride and community identity. Relevant strategic alignments include:

**Strategic Direction #1:** *Provide a comprehensive network of parkland, trails, and open space within the Town that allows for a diverse, inclusive, and affordable range of outdoor recreation opportunities.*

- The commemorative program enhances park amenities by adding benches and trees that improve visitor comfort and accessibility while maintaining the aesthetic integrity of public spaces

**Strategic Direction #4:** *Monitor the Town's assets in a deliberate and structured manner, with a central contact for the public who is responsible for management of facilities and services.*

- The policy establishes a formal, trackable process for installations and maintenance under the authority of the Manager of Parks and

Recreation, supporting the PRMP's recommendation for improved asset oversight

### **Replacement of Section 8.0 in By-law 66-23:**

Section 8.0 ("In Memoriam Requests") of the Tree Management Policy provided basic guidelines but lacked the procedural and accessibility detail now required for transparent administration. The new standalone policy fulfills that need, while ensuring the Tree Management Policy continues to govern species selection, maintenance, and environmental protection

## **Financial Impact**

Commemorative benches and trees are fully funded by donors, including purchase, installation, and plaque costs. Fees are outlined in Schedule A of the policy and include a contribution to a reserve for maintenance over the ten-year term:

- **Bench:** \$4,000 + HST
- **Tree:** \$1,000 + HST

No additional municipal funds are required beyond standard parks maintenance operations. The incremental amount between the cost of the bench / tree and the actual cost will be kept in a new Commemorative Program Restricted Reserve which will fund anticipated repairs and maintenance every year so that this program does not become a burden to the levy. We are hoping that it will be a self-funding program with review of the fees being considered if at any time they are not sufficient.

## **Strategic Priorities**

This report supports the goals and objectives set out in [Council's Strategic Pillars](#). The goal(s) it supports includes: Pillar 2 – Planning for the Future by understanding and exploring partnerships that are in the best interest of our community and by ensuring we have community facilities, assets, infrastructure, and green space.

## **Conclusion**

The Commemorative Policy formalizes a community program that enhances Aylmer's public parks and trail system, promotes accessibility, and ensures long-term maintenance and transparency in commemorative installations.

By approving this policy, Council will replace Section 8.0 of By-law 66-23 and implement a modern, sustainable, and community-focused framework that aligns with the Town's Parks and Recreation Master Plan and strategic goals.

Respectfully submitted,

Susie Wray

Manager of Parks and Recreation

Reviewed by Andy Grozelle, Chief Administrative Officer

# Appendix

## Attachments

1. Attachment 1: Commemorative Policy (October 2025)
2. Attachment 2: Tree Management Policy

## Follow Up

In adopting this report, what follow up action is required?

- By-law
- Agreement(s)/document(s) to be signed by Mayor and/or Clerk
- Social media/Website update or communication
- Other communication – Specify: