



Naming, Renaming, Commemoration Project

FACT SHEET



Overview



- The goal of this project was to create a framework for Calgary-based organizations and groups interested in pursuing plans for naming, renaming, commemoration, and removal (NRCR), to utilize in creating their own plans.
- The framework was based on research, established practices, and in-depth engagement with identified stakeholder groups and in its final form is presenting as a resourceful handbook.

Project deliverables, including the NRCR Handbook, can be found on the Heritage Calgary website.

PROJECT

- Today we are faced with big questions around the act of naming and, consequently, renaming.
- The questions surrounding naming and renaming are difficult and inevitable, and all circle around an age-old quandary – what’s in a name?
 - If the names of the places we cherish, frequent, and gather are not reflective of the fascinatingly diverse society Calgary is today, should those places be renamed to better reflect that diverse landscape?
 - When should we consider renaming something – when the name is exclusive or divisive? When it is harmful?

ENGAGEMENT

There were 3 phases of stakeholder engagement:

Phase 1
Individual Interviews

Phase 2
Small Group
Discussions & Follow
Up Interviews

Phase 3
Community and
Stakeholder
Engagement on
Framework Elements

Nearly 100 individuals were a part of this process

Typological analysis of the engagement led to the development of a set of related but distinct key categories of importance in a NRCR process

PUBLIC SURVEY

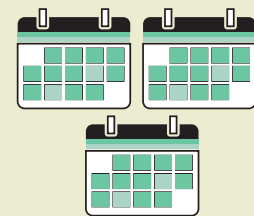
There was a public survey that was sent available to all Calgarians, distributed in fall 2021. There were 3 phases of stakeholder engagement:



400+ responses



**260+ written
responses**

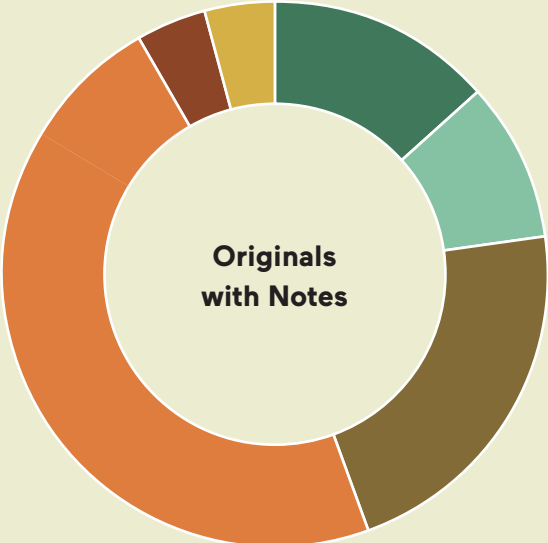


**Survey open for
3 months**

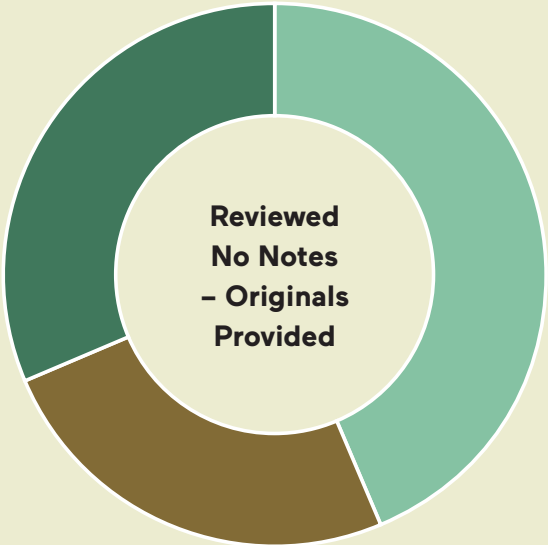
Over 80% of survey respondents rated the level of importance of this project as moderately to very important

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Examined over 70 published works (best and comparable practice, interviews, article, studies, etc.)



- Type:**
- 10 Municipalities
 - 7 Larger Jurisdictions (Nation/State)
 - 16 Education Facilities
 - Notably:** Yale, City of Toronto, Ryerson University
 - 0 Popular Media
 - 29 Academic Study
 - 3 Interview
 - 3 Other



- Type:**
- 7 Municipalities
 - 4 Larger Jurisdictions (Nation/State)
 - 5 Education Facilities

Principles

- The NRCR Handbook identifies common Principles that these types of projects encounter and address.
- The Principles present ideas and discussion questions to guide NRCR project teams through what might be complex discussions

A. Involve the community and people for whom the issue is important.

B. Understand the historical significance and original intention for the installation or name.

C. Understand any harm associated with the individual, event, or practice identified.

D. Engage with original namers or installers, or their community or descendants, when appropriate or possible.

E. Understand the land on which the statue, memorial, or commemoration is being placed or that the name will relate to.

F. Think about the physical context of the installation or naming/renaming opportunity.

G. Identify opportunities for education and awareness (i.e., historical significance, diversity of the community, impact for equity-seeking communities).

H. Amplify histories, people, and events that have been traditionally undertold or less known.

I. Align with the values or principles of the community or organization.

J. Explore the meaning or significance to the current community.

K. Consider meaning and significance acquired or lost over time.

L. Explore if the name or commemoration is honouring the whole person or a single act.

NRCR PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE	QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN YOUR PROJECT AND ANSWER WITH YOUR COMMUNITY
A Involve the community and people for whom the issue is important.	Who does this name or commemoration matter to? Are they involved in your project? What role would they like in the project? What role aligns with your project values and goals? Is your project team and process inclusive of all impacted communities? Does your project team reflect the diversity of your community? Who are you leaving out?
B Understand the historical significance and original intention for the installation or name.	What did the original commemorators intend to recognize? What was significant about the name or installation at the time? What historical context does it represent, and how? If this is a new name or installation, what is the contemporary context of this moment in history?
C Understand any harm associated with the individual, event, or practice.	Does the name or commemoration recognize a person, event, or practice that is connected with a negative, tragic, or harmful experience? For whom? What is their perspective? Sometimes we mark the dark parts of our history so we can remember and learn or to mark a loss or tragedy. If harm occurred in the past related to the name or commemoration, is the recognition respectful and appropriate for the context? Is it teaching something? Is it celebratory of a perspective that does not appropriately acknowledge the harm? Does the commemoration or name continue to cause harm today?
D Engage with original namers or installers, or their community or descendants, when appropriate or possible.	Who were the namers or installers of the commemoration? Are they part of a larger community? If a particular person or group is recognized, who are their descendants ? Is it appropriate to engage with them? Why or why not? How will you engage with those families or community members? What do you want to know?
E Understand the land on which the statue, memorial, or commemoration is being placed or that the name will relate to.	What Indigenous territory is your project located in? What is the history and contemporary context of the land where the name or commemoration will stand? Is the precise location of land where the name or commemoration will stand sacred, culturally significant, or otherwise important to one or more First Nations or communities? How do you know? Have you done the research? How will you engage the First Nation(s) or communities related to the site?
F Think about the physical context of the installation or naming/renaming opportunity.	What is nearby to the location of your name or commemoration? (i.e., in the neighbourhood, next door, sharing the area or space) What else has happened there? What is the story of that place over time? How is the space or area used today? Is the name or commemoration appropriate for that context? How do you know?

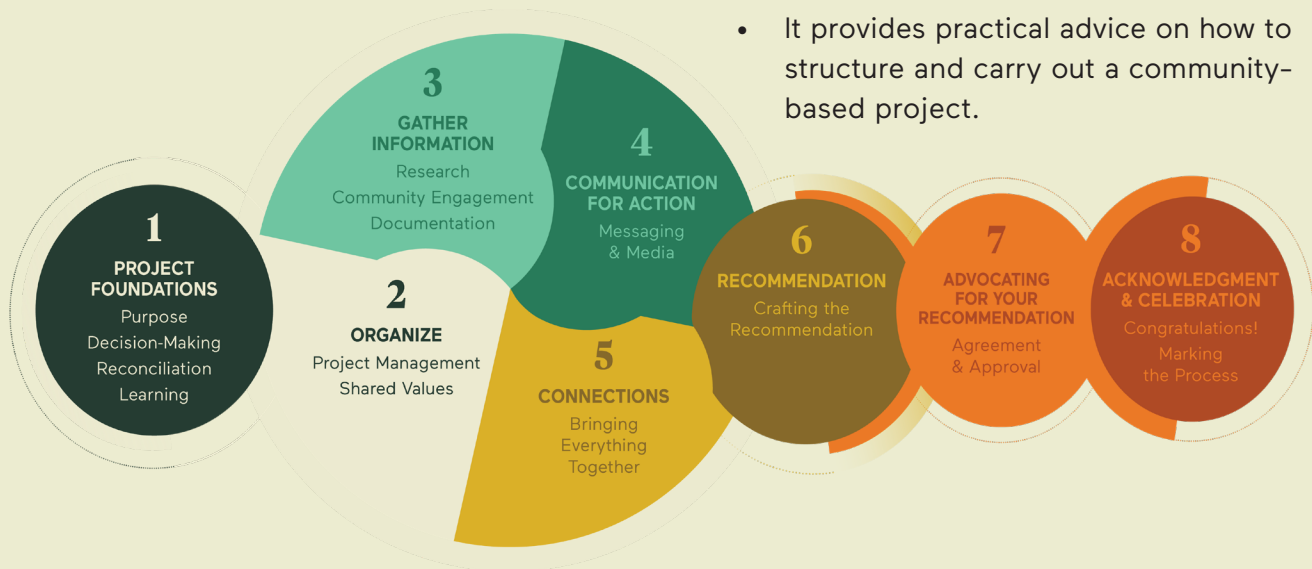
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NRCR PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE	QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN YOUR PROJECT AND ANSWER WITH YOUR COMMUNITY
G Identify opportunities for education and awareness (i.e., historical significance, diversity of the community, impact for equity-seeking communities).	Does the name or commemoration recognize a person, event, or practice that people do not know about but could learn or benefit from? Is the name or commemoration an opportunity to teach or share an idea or story that is important? Is this the best way to tell that story or share that idea? Does the name or commemoration need to be contextualized ? Is there a way to add interpretation to tell a more complete story? Does this name or commemoration add to a fuller reflection of the community by sharing the story of an underrepresented cultural group or diverse perspective? How will this name or commemoration move the community forward in a positive way?
H Amplify histories, people, and events that have been traditionally undertold or less known.	Is the name or commemoration a chance to tell an undertold story or to better reflect your community? Is there something here to learn from or celebrate that others would benefit from knowing about?
I Align with the values or principles of the community or organization.	Does the name or commemoration align with the values of our community or organization today? Why or why not? How do you know?
J Explore the meaning or significance to the current community.	Does the name or commemoration still have meaning to the contemporary community? Is there an opportunity for learning about that meaning? Has the community evolved so that the importance of the name or commemoration is no longer aligned with community priorities? Can that story be told in a way that is more inclusive or appropriate ? Would there be a better outcome if it was told in a different place or through a different media that allows for a fuller contextualization? Are there errors or oversights that need correcting ? Or language that needs an update?
K Consider meaning and significance acquired or lost over time.	Does this name or commemoration relate to a particular person? What is their story? Does the name or commemoration over-emphasize part of their story? Was this person an active participant in, or responsible for, something that caused harm ? If so, how does that position or act relate to their life story? Is using a person's name or likeness the best approach , or is there another name or image relevant to the context, event, or work being honoured that might be a good idea?
L Explore if the name or commemoration is honouring the whole person or a single act.	Does the name or commemoration mean something different today? Is that an opportunity to tell a more complete story? Has the meaning or significance of the name or commemoration changed in a way that something about its presentation needs to change? Does it need to be interpreted differently? Removed? Contextualized?

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Process



- The NRCR Handbook identifies eight steps to guide community groups through an NRCR project.
- It is structured around the core findings from the research and community engagement.
- It provides practical advice on how to structure and carry out a community-based project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Heritage Calgary has several recommendations to ensure this tool and the spirit of the tool is well represented and ingrained in our future policies and ways of communicating and approaching these types of projects

- In collaboration with The City of Calgary and other Calgary community organizations Heritage Calgary plans to spearhead the adoption and utilization of the NRCR Handbook within the City of Calgary.

