



City of Hamilton Report for Recommendation

To: Mayor and Members
General Issues Committee

Date: May 21, 2025

Report No: PED25098

Subject/Title: Donation of Monument Marking the Global Irish
Famine Way

Ward(s) Affected: Ward 2

Recommendations

- 1) That the City of Hamilton **ACCEPT** the donation of a monument commemorating the Irish migration to Hamilton and the Irish Famine, marking the extension of the Global Irish Famine Way to be installed along the Waterfront Trail at Pier 8;
- 2) That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and **BE DIRECTED** to execute any agreements and ancillary documents, between the City of Hamilton and the National Famine Way organization to accept the donation in a form satisfactory to the General Manager of Planning and Economic Development and the City Solicitor;
- 3) That \$15,000, donated by the National Famine Way organization, **BE DEPOSITED** to the Public Art and Monuments Maintenance Balance Sheet Account 22323-000100 for the long-term maintenance of the monument.

Key Facts

- The Global Irish Famine Way is an initiative of the Irish Heritage Trust and the National Famine Museum. The Irish Famine Way follows the journeys of Irish Famine emigrants and will be the largest heritage trail in the world.
- Bronze shoes that mark the trail will be installed in 15 locations across Canada including Grosse Ile, NFLD, Quebec City, QC, Ottawa, Toronto, Niagara and Kingston, ON among others.
- The bronze shoes have a granite base with an interpretive plaque; the proposed installation location is along the Waterfront Trail at Pier 8.

- Staff evaluated the Detailed Donation Proposal (Appendix A) based on criteria outlined in the Council approved Art and Monuments Donation Policy. Criteria include relevance, appropriateness of location, durability, public safety, and legal requirements.
- Staff concluded the donation satisfies the criteria, has negligible cost impacts on the City and will add to the cultural richness of Hamilton's Waterfront.

Financial Considerations

All fabrication and installation costs will be funded through the donor with an estimated cost of \$13,410. An additional contribution of \$15,000 will be provided by the donor to offset the long-term maintenance costs for the monument. This amount was determined through the specifications in the Art and Monuments Donation Policy.

Background

The National Famine Way approached the City about Hamilton's inclusion on the Global Irish Famine Way in July 2024. A Detailed Donation Proposal was received on July 11, 2024.

Analysis

The Detailed Donation Proposal was reviewed and evaluated as per the requirements and processes outlined in the Council approved Art and Monuments Donation Policy.

The Detailed Donation Proposal was circulated for comment to staff from Planning and Economic Development, Immigration Partnerships, Parks, Heritage Resource Management, and Placemaking, Public Art & Projects. The following is an overview of comments:

Heritage Resource Management:

- The subject matter of the monument as described in the Detailed Donation Proposal is factual, does not duplicate any existing monument in the City, and is relevant to many Hamiltonians.
- The selected location is appropriate and fits well with the interpretive themes of the area already communicated in existing interpretive plaques and plans.

Parks:

- The monument will not interfere with any utilities, existing structures, or Parks maintenance. Parks staff had no concerns about the selected location.

Immigration Partnership:

- The City has three statues in total that focus on its immigration history, all in the downtown core, none of which focus on the Irish population.

- Staff support the monument installation as immigration was and is, important to Hamilton's growth, development, and identity; the Irish were a significant population in the 19th century.
- The interpretive panel will provide needed context.

Public Art:

- The proposed materials of bronze and granite are robust, durable and will minimize on-going maintenance requirements.

Staff estimate cost for the granite of approx. \$3,400 including installation, \$2,700 for interpretive plaque fabrication and installation, and additional \$7,310 for the foundation and geotechnical review. The total estimated cost is \$13,410. The bronze shoes will be supplied by the donor and shipped and stored until time of install at the donors' expense.

Conclusion

Staff confirm the donation satisfies the requirements of the Art and Monuments Donation Policy. Consultation with relevant internal City departments showed support for the installation. Staff therefore recommend entering into a donation agreement with the Irish Famine Way to accept and install the monument as described in the Detailed Donation Proposal.

Alternatives

Not applicable.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This recommendation supports the following Council Priorities:

- 2. Safe and Thriving Neighbourhoods
- 2.3. Provide vibrant parks, recreation and public space

The Global Irish Way monument will contribute to the vibrancy of the Waterfront Trail by adding an informative and educational installation for park users. No other monument in Hamilton reflects the Irish immigrant experience.

Previous Reports Submitted

The Art and Monuments Donation Policy (PED19068) was approved by General Issues Committee on April 3, 2019:

- [10.2 PED19068.pdf](#)
- [10.2 PED19068 - Appendix A.pdf](#)
- [10.2 PED19068 - Appendix B.pdf](#)

and approved with amendments by Council at its April 10, 2019 meeting:

- [Agenda Package - Council_Apr24_2019.pdf](#)

Consultation

- Andrea Smith, Senior Consultant - West Harbour Redevelopment, Planning and Economic Development
- Cory Manning, Superintendent – Parks North, Parks & Cemeteries Section, Environmental Services Division, Public Works Department
- Debra Seabrook, Manager, Heritage Resource Management Section, Tourism and Culture Division, Planning and Economic Development Department
- Esther Knecht, Conservator, Public Art, Placemaking & Projects, Tourism and Culture Division, Planning and Economic Development Department
- Meredith Leonard, Senior Curator, Heritage Resource Management Section, Tourism and Culture Division, Planning and Economic Development Department
- Sarah Wayland, Senior Project Manager, Immigration Partnership, Planning and Economic Development
- Travis Hill, Curator, Indigenous Culture & Heritage, Heritage Resource Management & Indigenous Relations Division, Planning and Economic Development Department

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: Detailed Donation Proposal

Prepared by:

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Tourism and Culture, Planning and Economic Development

**Submitted and
recommended by:**

Lisa Abbott
Director, Tourism and Culture
Planning and Economic Development Department