

Regional District of Nanaimo Board – Meeting Date: January 13, 2026

This document contains closed ‘in-camera’ meeting decisions that have been released because they are no longer considered sensitive.

Parks Naming Policy Amendment - Update

26-IC-008

It was moved and seconded that the Board approve the amended “Parks Naming Policy No. C1.3” as attached to the “Parks Naming Policy Amendment - Update” staff report dated November 25, 2025.

CARRIED

Released: March 6, 2026

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This policy provides guidelines for naming, **dual naming** and **renaming** of regional parks, community parks, regional trails, community trails and **park features**.

2. DEFINITIONS

“**Board**” means the Regional District of Nanaimo Board of Directors.

“**Dual naming**” means giving a regional or community **park**, trail, or **park feature** two names (for example, an English language name and an Indigenous name).

“**Indigenous**” means the original peoples of Canada and their descendants, including First Nations (status and non-status), Métis, and Inuit.

“**Indigenous Governing Body**” means an entity that is authorized to act on behalf of Indigenous peoples that hold rights recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

“**Park**” means any area of land or water, operated by the Regional District as regional or community park, trail, roadside path or water access, that:

- a) the **RDN** has possession and control of pursuant to the *Park (Regional) Act* or “Regional Trails Regulation”;
- b) the **RDN** has possession and control of pursuant to Section 510 of the *Local Government Act*;
- c) the **RDN** holds in fee simple or by lease, license, permit, statutory right of way or private land access agreement for the purpose of a **park**.

“**Park feature**” refers to a significant valuable asset within a **park** such as a natural feature, trail, facility, community hall or structure.

“**RDN**” means the Regional District of Nanaimo.

“**Regional or community historical or cultural significance**” means a strong association with ways of life, events or people that had and/or continue to have an important influence on the history or development of the region or a community.

“**Renaming**” means replacing a current name with a new name or a **dual name**.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

3.1 The **Board** is responsible for:

- a) approving this Policy;
- b) approving future amendments to this Policy;

- c) approving the naming, **renaming**, or **dual naming** of all **parks** and **park features**.

3.2 The General Manager of Recreation and Parks Services is responsible for:

- a) ensuring compliance with this Policy as required;
- b) approving and issuing administrative procedure(s) and/or guidelines required to implement this Policy.

3.3 The Department is responsible for:

- a) implementing this Policy;
- b) bringing forward future amendments to this Policy for the **Board's** consideration;
- c) inviting Indigenous Governing Bodies to engage with the **RDN** in the naming of a **park** or **park feature**;
- d) reviewing potential names;
- e) bringing forward potential names for the **Board's** consideration.

4. POLICY

4.1 Policy Statement

Naming, **dual naming** and **renaming** of regional and community **parks** and **park features** are ways to celebrate the region's unique history and cultural diversity, and to recognize donors who have provided significant services to regional and community parks and trails.

In implementing this Policy, the **RDN** seeks to build on its ongoing reconciliation work and to incorporate the spirit and intent of British Columbia's *Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and Action Plan to advance meaningful recognition of Indigenous history and culture. The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport oversees geographical naming. The responsibility for naming regional and community parks and trails lies with local governments. Names should be clear, unambiguous and consistent with established naming conventions. Naming is considered a public trust, ensuring names reflect **historical, cultural, or geographical significance**. This ensures that **park** names are meaningful and preserve the heritage and identity of the area.

4.2 Guidelines

- a) A name for a **park** or **park feature** should be given with the intention that it will be permanent. If a name change is deemed appropriate by the **Board**, the **renaming** shall be subject to the criteria and procedures outlined in this Policy. All regional and community **parks** and **park features** can be named, **dual named** or **renamed** at the direction of the **Board**.
- b) In selecting a name for a **park** or **park feature**, consideration shall be given to:
 - i. Local geography;

- ii. The local road name or subdivision name;
 - iii. Regional or community **historical or cultural significance**;
 - iv. Indigenous **historical or cultural significance**;
 - v. Constant natural features in and around the park; and/or
 - vi. A significant or predominant plant or animal that is native to the park.
- c) In selecting a name for a **park** or **park feature**, consideration should also be given to the following:
- i. The name should not confuse the public about location or function but enhance the user's ability to locate the **park** or **park feature**.
 - ii. The name should not duplicate or sound like the name of another **RDN park** or **park feature** and should be compatible with current **RDN** names.
 - iii. The name should avoid potentially negative associations, abbreviations, nicknames, and acronyms.
- d) Where an **Indigenous Governing Body** proposes an **Indigenous** name for a **park** or **park feature**, that name may be used as the name. Alternatively, the **park** or **park feature** may be **dual named** with the **Indigenous** name and an English language name identified in accordance with this Policy and approved by the **Board**.
- e) The Regional District will not consider naming a **park** or **park feature** after a person unless the person has donated the park land or **park feature** and when that person (or the person's family, if deceased) specifically requests that the **park** or **park feature** be named after them.
- f) Where the **Board** wishes to acknowledge the significant contributions of a person or group who did not donate the park land or **park feature** other means of recognition may be used at the direction of the **Board**, such as dedication on a plaque or cairn.
- g) Names of a controversial or political nature will not be permitted.

5. PROCEDURE

- 5.1 The **RDN** may use various methods to solicit names for **parks** and **park features**. **Board** members, staff, and members of the public may propose potential names for consideration.
- 5.2 The **RDN** shall invite **Indigenous Governing Bodies** to engage with the **RDN** in the naming of a new **park** or **park feature**.
- 5.3 **Park** and **park feature** naming requests must be received in writing and should explain why the **park** or **park feature** name should be recognized under the Policy.
- 5.4 For a name or **dual name** proposed by an **Indigenous Governing Body**, an approved **Indigenous Governing Body** resolution is required to accompany the request.

- 5.5 Where it is proposed that a **park** or **park feature** be named after a living person, RDN staff shall ensure that a criminal record check of that person is undertaken.
- 5.6 **RDN** staff shall review the request in relation to the provisions of the Policy and discuss their findings with the proponent.
- 5.7 For community parks or trails, the request shall be forwarded to the respective Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee or Electoral Area A Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee for consideration before moving to the **RDN** Committee of the Whole for consideration. The Committee of the Whole will review all submissions and provide an opportunity for public input prior to making a recommendation to the **RDN Board**.
- 5.8 Following the **Board's** approval of a name or **dual name**, Parks staff shall:
- a) notify relevant internal departments, public bodies, government agencies, and emergency responders;
 - b) submit requests to update internal databases and maps and Google Maps; and
 - c) make other notifications as required.
- 5.9 Naming or **dual naming** of a **park** or **park feature** may be acknowledged with a ceremony.
- 5.10 Names of all **parks** and **park features** formally named under this Policy may be displayed in a prominent location, pending available budget. Interpretive signage may be used to explain the significance of the name.
- 5.11 For lands not owned but managed by the **RDN**, collaboration with other jurisdictions for park naming approvals will be required.

Department	Parks Services	Approval Date	May 9, 1995
Resolution No.		Amendment Date(s)	July 22, 2025 January 13, 2026
		Next Scheduled Review Date	