To Chair and Members
Committee of the Whole – Community Development

From Paul Moore
General Manager, Community Development

1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item [ ]
Item For Consideration [X]

2.0 Topic Street Naming Request for the Name “Hickey”
[Financial Impact – None]

3.0 Recommendation

THAT the request to add the name “Hickey” to the Municipal List of Potential Street Names BE APPROVED.

4.0 Purpose and Overview

The Brantford Police Services Board has submitted a request to add the name “Hickey” to the Municipal List of Potential Street Names in honour of former Constable John Hickey who suffered injuries while on duty that resulted in his death in 1897.

5.0 Background and Analysis

The Municipal List of Potential Street Names, as approved by Council, is used to name new streets within the City of Brantford. Property developers select names from this list when naming new streets within their developments. The List includes the names of veterans from the “Album of Honour for Brant County”
who lost their lives while serving Canada in the Second World War, women whose profiles are written in the publication “Significant Lives: Profiles of Brant County Women”, and other notable people approved by Council.

In order to add new names to the Municipal List of Potential Street Names, Council approval is required and the process begins with a written request to add a new name to the list. A request was received from the Brantford Police Services Board to add the name “Hickey” to the list in honour of former Police Constable John Hickey. The Brantford Police Services Board passed the following resolution on February 13, 2020:

“THAT Brantford Police Services Board ENDORSE the inclusion of Constable John Hickey on the Street Name Listing that the City maintains for new streets in Brantford.”

A summary of research conducted by the Brantford Police Service to understand John Hickey's life, character, and service as police constable is attached to this Report as Appendix A. John Hickey became a Police Constable for the City of Brantford in 1888 at the age of 31. In 1895, while performing his duties as Constable, he boarded a trolley car which was derailed after hitting a pole and suffered what was described as “very severe” injuries “of a permanent character”. Due to his injuries, he was unable to return to work and in 1897, he died as a result of these injuries at the age of 40.

6.0 Input From Other Sources

In preparing this Report, Staff consulted with County of Brant Planning Staff. County Planning Staff had no concerns regarding the name “Hickey” since the proposed name is neither a duplicate nor similar to any street names in the County of Brant.

7.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications to the municipality associated with this Report.

8.0 Conclusion

A request has been received from the Brantford Police Services Board to add the name “Hickey” to the Municipal List of Potential Street Names to allow a future road to be named after Constable John Hickey. Staff supports this
request to honour Constable Hickey who served the Brantford community and died as a result of injuries sustained while performing his work duties.

Victoria Coates, M.PL.
Intermediate Planner
Long Range Planning
Community Development

Nicole Wilmot, MCIP, RPP
Manager
Long Range Planning
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Lucy Hives, MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning
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Paul Moore, MCIP, RPP
General Manager
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Attachments (if applicable)

Appendix A – Research on Constable John Hickey

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required [ ] yes [X] no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk [ ] yes [X] no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? [ ] yes [X] no
Appendix A – Research on Constable John Hickey

From: Schmutz, Jordan
Sent: Friday, December 20, 2019 1:00 PM
To: Victoria M. Coates
Subject: On Duty Death of Constable John Hickey

Victoria,

Thank you very much for your time and direction today. Please find below, details relating to the On-Duty death of Constable John Hickey. I wish to request that he be considered for inclusion on the Prominence Point Memorial as well as that of prospective future street names. Should it be required, I am able to provide all sources of information which had contributed to confirming the findings of the Brantford Police Service.

John Hickey was born 1856 to parents James and Ellen Hickey, who had immigrated to the Brantford area from Tipperary, Ireland that same year. John had been raised by his parents within our community at unknown locations. His father James had purchased land in 1879 for his family, located between 35 Nelson St and 36 Wellington St, now known to be 207-211 Brock St. Upon this land, the family had built a home, stable, out buildings and planted an orchard.

In the subsequent years, John had married wife Margaret and fathered 5 children. They included Mary, James (deceased at 14 months), John, Reginald and Kathleen. Between the years 1883-1888, John had supported his young family through work as a labourer.

On Monday February 20th 1888 at the age of 31, John Hickey had been selected from numerous applicants as a Police Constable for the City of Brantford. At the time, he had been described in a Brantford Expositor news article as “a fine looking strapping fellow”. That same month and in the same publication, John was teased for the manner in which his overcoat had fit. The overcoat had been previously possessed by an officer of slighter build and was described as “considerably abbreviated” when worn by John who was of significant stature.

John Hickey had continued his work as a Police Constable in Brantford for 7 years. Throughout his employment, John was described as having been “genial and affable, numbering friends by the score”.

On Thursday July 18th 1895, John Hickey was acting in the capacity of Police Constable while positioned on a Trolley Car travelling towards West Brantford. While in the act of “alighting” (boarding), the Trolley Car had experienced a derailment as a result of error on behalf of the Motorman and Conductor. Constable Hickey had been “dashed violently to the ground” after the car which he had occupied struck a pole. As a result, Constable Hickey had suffered what was described as “very severe” injuries to his left knee and left wrist. He was in turn required to take leave from his duties for several weeks.

Two months following the accident, Constable Hickey had attempted to return to his duties with the Brantford Police. Unfortunately the injury “was of a permanent character” and he again was required to seek leave. During the nearly two years which followed, Constable Hickey had suffered ill effects of this injury. He was described as having “battled steadily”, “never giving up” and displaying “sheer pluck and indomitable will”.

On Tuesday June 29th 1897 however, Constable John Hickey succumbed to his injuries at the age of 40 and passed away in his home while being cared for by family and friends. The cause of death was described as “blood poisoning”. At the time, wife Margaret had been left widowed and responsible for the care their four remaining children.

The events described within the content of this application had not been documented effectively nor included in the 142 year history of the Brantford Police Service. It had been brought to the attention of our membership by Teresa Dunnigan who is the great granddaughter of John Hickey. Teresa had uncovered details relating to the “accident” through a review of memoirs belonging to her grandfather Reginald (authored 1975).

Through a review of historic documents maintained by the Provincial Land Registry, Brantford Public Library and St. Joseph’s Cemetery, our membership was able to confirm and is satisfied that John Hickey was employed by the City of Brantford as a Police Constable and acting in this capacity on July 18th 1895. We are further satisfied that while performing his duties, Constable John Hickey had suffered a severe injury resulting in his death on June 29th 1897. His death is in large part attributable to the period in our history when the injury was sustained. At the time, there was limited availability of effective medical techniques and medications. The injury described in all likelihood would have been survivable had it occurred recently. Instead, Constable Hickey had apparently suffered a great deal and over an extended period of time while attempting recovery. In doing so, he had demonstrated considerable character and courage.