
TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: GOWAN ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST PLAQUE

WARD: 1

PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT: W. LOEVENMARK, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL PLANNER Ext.4743

SUBMITTED BY: R. SUTTON, P. Eng.
DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING

GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: D. FRIARY
GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT (ACTING)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the Director of Engineering be authorized to receive an Ontario Heritage Plaque in honour of Sir James Gowan for placement in Kempenfelt Park, as per Appendix "A" to Staff Report ENG013-18, with the following conditions:
 - a) The Ontario Heritage Trust be responsible for the full costs of wording, manufacture and installation, to the satisfaction of the City of Barrie;
 - b) That the City may remove or replace the Gowan Ontario Heritage Plaque at the end of its lifecycle at the City's discretion; and
 - c) That Planning and Asset Management and Access Barrie staff be authorized to coordinate a public unveiling event with the Ontario Heritage Trust.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

2. The purpose of this Staff Report is to request Council's endorsement of the acquisition of an Ontario Heritage Trust Plaque featuring Sir James Gowan in Kempenfelt Park.
3. When the district of Simcoe was created in 1843, 27-year-old James Robert Gowan accepted the position as the first judge of Simcoe County. Gowan and his parents purchased seven acres overlooking the bay, between Duckworth Street and St. Vincent Park, and named the estate 'Ardraven'. Gowan's legal career became legendary in Canada, contributing to the legal development of Ontario and Canada, establishing the colony's first legal periodical the Upper Canada Law Journal, and advising leading politicians such as Sir John A. Macdonald. After 40 years on the bench, he was appointed to the Senate in 1884 and rewarded with a knighthood in 1905. He is also remembered for his great community contributions to Barrie and as a member of the Trinity Anglican Church. He was the founding member of the Barrie Grammar School in 1843 and chairman of the School Board from 1871 to 1892. He died on March 18, 1909 and is buried in the family vault at Barrie Union Cemetery.
4. After Gowan died in 1909, his heirs donated the section of Ardraven on the water side of Kempenfelt Bay to the Town of Barrie for use as a public park, now known as Kempenfelt Park.

5. The Provincial Plaque Program is Ontario Heritage Trust's oldest known activity. Over 1,270 provincial plaques have been unveiled, including 22 international plaques. The plaques tell the stories of the people, places and events that have helped shape Ontario and introduce visitors to the unique character of each provincial region. The Provincial Plaque Program is a cost-sharing activity. Applicants contribute a minimum of \$5,000 as well as in-kind support with payment received in full prior to the casting of the plaque. While the contributions of sponsors are appreciated and acknowledged, only the Ontario Heritage Trust's name appears on the credit line of provincial plaques. All plaques are produced in English and French text, with the text generated by the Trust.
6. Barrie currently has six Ontario Heritage Trust plaques on the following subjects (see Appendix "B"):
 - a) 'Andrew Frederick Hunter 1863-1940' – located at 37 Mulcaster Street
 - b) 'Hewitt Bernard 1825-1893' – located at Waterfront Heritage Trail (WHT) Station 8
 - c) 'Simcoe County Court House and Gaol' – located at 87 Mulcaster Street
 - d) 'Steamboating on Lake Simcoe' – located at WHT Station 6
 - e) 'Nine Mile Portage' – Memorial Square/Meridian Place (temporarily removed for construction)
 - f) 'William Edward Gallie' – broken, and in storage at R. A. Archer Operations Centre (formerly located at Queens Park), scheduled for replacement in the WHT Station 8 in the new interpretive sign standard for WHT.
7. On November 5, 2012, City Council adopted Motion 12-G-301 authorizing the development of the WHT Concept as follows in Item 1:

"1. That the concept of a Heritage Trail along Barrie's waterfront and in the future development of the Allandale Station lands be endorsed."
8. One of the key initiatives of the WHT (see Appendix "C") is to consolidate existing historical plaques and markers into a unified interpretive system. This allows an easy-to-follow approach for visitors and residents exploring our historical heritage, while providing a clear separation from available recreational and event space for other parkland activities. In 2014, the Station 6, was built with two metal plaques relocated into the space; 'Steamboating' and 'J. C. Morrison' (see Appendix "B").
9. In December 5, 2016, the WHT was officially opened to the public, with a plan for a series of 11 interpretive stations around Barrie's waterfront, with Station 1 to be located in the east end of Allandale Station Park and Station 11 at the end of the North Shore Trail (NST) at Penetanguishene Road. Station 10, with the theme of the "East End," is planned to contain a reference on a map to Sir James Gowan's estate in its interpretive signage, targeted to be installed in late 2018 (see Appendix "C").

ANALYSIS

10. On February 15, 2016, staff received a letter from Mr. Mark Fisher, President of the Barrie Historical Association, requesting permission to fund and install an Ontario Heritage Trust plaque with respect to Sir James Gowan, in Kempenfelt Park, as per Appendix "D". In early 2018, Mr. Fisher notified the City that the Barrie Historical Association was successful in receiving a grant and that the grant funding had to be used by the end of 2018.

11. The City of Barrie is host to an existing collection of Ontario Heritage Trust Plaques. The plaques are fabricated of metal through a cast in place process and typically represents an investment of \$5,000 each. The metal is very durable and is expected to last a minimum of 15 years or more, compared to the new interpretive sign standard for the WHT which typically has a 10 year warranty period. There is no existing program for metal sign replacement at this time. Staff propose that new metal signs may be received where there is no location or thematic accommodation within the WHT program but that any replacement signs be manufactured at the City's cost be in accordance with the WHT standard, which represents a lower cost at \$2,000 each.
12. The proposed Gowan plaque represents an opportunity to capture additional information on the history of this notable resident and owner of the former Gowan property, now known as Kempenfelt Park; that will not be captured through the existing sign plan for the WHT, at no capital cost to the City.
13. The Ontario Heritage Trust would be responsible for the full costs of wording, manufacture and installation of the metal plaque. The City would be responsible for light maintenance of the sign and general maintenance of the surrounding area. The City would have full ownership of the sign after the installation.
14. The Barrie Historical Association has requested that the plaque be located in Kempenfelt Park to honour Sir James Gowan as the former owner of these lands. Staff propose to situate the plaque approximately midway along Kempenfelt Drive in the park (see Appendix "A"). Although this location is not part of the WHT, the park abuts the trail and allows footpath access along the NST to WHT Station 10 located 800 m to the west along the NST.
15. The current proposed Gowan sign has been approved by the Ontario Heritage Trust and funding confirmed by the Barrie Historical Association. Should Council approve the plaque, the research and development phase would be initiated immediately. Once the text has been finalized by the Ontario Heritage Trust, the fabrication of the plaque would take approximately six to eight weeks. The unveiling event would likely be scheduled for September or October 2018. The official unveiling would be organized by Trust members with coordination from the City. Along with Barrie Council, the Trust proposes to invite the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario and Chief Justice George Strathy, a Gowan descendant, as well as county and local officials.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

16. The following environmental matters have been considered in the development of the recommendation:
 - a) Kempenfelt Park is within the Regulatory Limits of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA). Staff would consult with LSRCA for permission to install a footing into Kempenfelt Park, and submit an application for a permit, if required.

FINANCIAL

17. The Barrie Historical Association has raised the approximately \$5,000 funding required by the Trust. Based on this funding, the Ontario Heritage Trust will supply all materials and coordinate installation labour with the Barrie Historical Association for the sign. City staff will assist by overseeing installation of the signs; this can be accommodated in the 2018 department work plans. The costs associated with maintaining the Gowan sign in the future will be in the form of staff time to inspect the sign while undertaking regular park maintenance.

ALTERNATIVES

18. The following alternatives are available for consideration by General Committee:

Alternative #1

General Committee could maintain the existing signage proposed for the Waterfront Heritage Trail.

This alternative is not recommended as it removes an opportunity to benefit from a unique pre-funded interpretive plaque.

Alternative #2

General Committee could alter the proposed recommendation by requiring that the Ontario Heritage Trust and/or the Barrie Historical Association organization assume responsibility for the maintenance costs of the interpretive panel.

This alternative is not recommended as the funding provided by the Barrie Historical Association to supply and install the interpretive panels does not include maintenance costs and the Barrie Historical Association does not have alternate funding in place for future sign maintenance costs. The Ontario Heritage Trust does not provide funding for the production or maintenance of metal plaques.

LINKAGE TO 2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN

19. The recommendation(s) included in this Staff Report support the following goals identified in the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan:

Responsible Spending

20. The addition of a Gowan Ontario Heritage Plaque adds to the historical character of Kempenfelt Park and allows an expansion of the themes of Barrie's East End to be identified in the WHT, at no cost to the City of Barrie. This represents a cost savings of approximately \$5,000 in staff time development and installation, and the cost of sign fabrication. The sign represents an economic benefit to the community by amplifying Culture and Heritage as a tourism driver.

APPENDIX "A"

Proposed Plaque Location in Kempenfelt Park



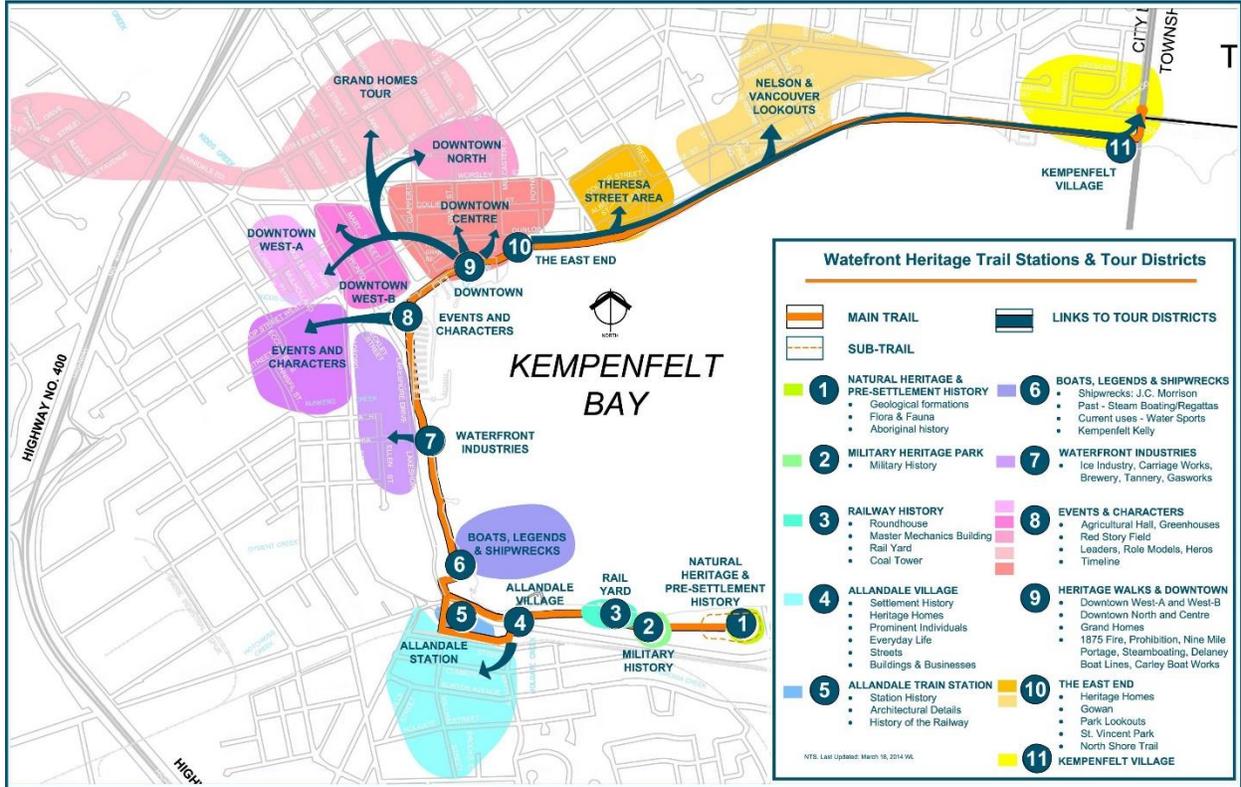
APPENDIX "B"

Examples of Existing Metal Ontario Heritage Plaques in Barrie



APPENDIX "C"

Waterfront Heritage Trail Context



APPENDIX "D"

Letter of Request to the City for the Gowan Plaque



"PRESERVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE"

45 Sunnidale Rd.
Barrie, ON L4N 1G6
www.barriehistorical.com

February 15, 2016

Walter Fischer
Supervisor
Parks and Planning
City of Barrie

Dear Mr. Fischer:

The Barrie Historical Association is presently undertaking a project to have the Ontario Heritage Trust locate a plaque with respect to Sir James Gowan, the first judge of Simcoe County, 1843-1883, in Kempenfelt Park. It is also significant that this land, originally part of Gowan's estate of Ardraven, was donated to the City of Barrie upon his death in 1909.

A location relatively close to Kempenfelt Drive would be preferable where it would be visible and accessible, according to the parameters set by Ontario Heritage Trust.

Ontario Heritage Trust would be responsible for the full costs of wording, manufacture and installation. The City would be responsible for general maintenance, in particular, the surrounding area.

There are a number of similar Ontario Heritage Trust plaques located around the Barrie waterfront that denote the rich history of the City. A plaque for Sir James Gowan would be a worthy addition.

Yours Sincerely,

Mark W. Fisher
President
Barrie Historical Association