



**Council Member Report
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of August 8, 2019**

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| To | Committee of the Whole | Date: | August 2, 2019 |
| From | Councilors Alto and Thornton-Joe | | |
| Subject | Marking the 100 th Remembrance Day | | |

Background

In March 2018, the District of Saanich approved a proposal to recognize the London Plane memorial trees planted along Shelbourne Street as a memorial homage to soldiers from British Columbia who served and died in the First World War.

The London Plane trees were originally dedicated on October 2, 1921. Originally it was anticipated that there would be one tree for every BC soldier lost and that Shelbourne Street would be called Memorial Avenue. Given the high numbers of lost soldiers not all of the trees were planted and the proposed name was never implemented. Over the years some of the trees have been lost as Shelbourne Street has been widened, and as a result the historical significance of the trees has been diminished.

In 2018, memorial “medallions” noting the original intent to name the street “Memorial Avenue” and noting the phrase most often associated with Remembrance Day (*Lest We Forget*), were designed, manufactured and mounted on top of existing street signs and some traffic signs along Shelbourne Street in Saanich. Photographs of such medallions, on a dedicated pole, and mounted atop a street sign, are attached, below.

2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Armistice Day, the precursor to our modern Remembrance Day. First observed in 1919, “Armistice Day” commemorated the armistice agreement that ended the First World War on Monday, November 11, 1918, at 11 am, the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.

From 1921 to 1930, “Armistice Day” was held on the Monday of the week in which November 11 fell. In 1931, Alan Neill, Member of Parliament for Comox–Alberni, introduced a bill to observe “Armistice Day” only on November 11. Passed by the House of Commons, the bill also changed the name to “Remembrance Day”. The first official “Remembrance Day” was observed on November 11, 1931.

Each year on November 11, Canadians pause in a moment of silence to honour and remember the men and women who have served, and continue to serve Canada during times of war, conflict and peace – the more than 2,300,000 Canadians who have served throughout our nation’s history and the more than 118,000 who died while serving.

Remembrance Day is a federal statutory holiday. A national ceremony is held at the National War Memorial in Ottawa, at which the Governor General of Canada presides over a ceremony attended by the Prime Minister, government officials, representatives of Veterans’ organizations, diplomatic representatives, dignitaries, Veterans and the general public.

Representatives of the local active branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, the Trafalgar/Pro Patria Branch #292, have indicated support for this project in principle.

This proposal is time sensitive, in that it promotes a recognition of the centenary of Remembrance Day in 2019.

Recommendation

That staff be directed to report back at the September 5th Committee of the Whole meeting on the costs and resource implications associated with:

1. creating memorial medallions commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Remembrance Day
2. installing medallions on existing street and/or some traffic signs along both sides of Shelbourne Street from Bay Street to North Dairy Road
3. hosting an event to mark the installations in the week prior to November 11, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Alto



Councillor Thornton-Joe

ATTACHMENTS

- **Attachment A: Examples of the medallions mounted on the Saanich stretch of Shelbourne Street**