

Subject: The plan to rename Cornwallis Street...

What's in a name? A lot, if you are a resident of Halifax Regional Municipality and question the actions of HRM Regional Council to banish civic recognition of Governor Colonel Edward Cornwallis who established, defended and oversaw the early development of one of Canada's most historic cities.

And now, after removing the Cornwallis statue in downtown Halifax, Mayor Mike Savage and Council have launched an online survey "seeking new street name suggestions for Cornwallis Street." This follows the questionable report and recommendations of the *Task Force on the Commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and Commemoration of Indigenous History* approved by Council in July 2020. (See - The Halifax Military Heritage Preservation Society's *Official Statement Regarding Task Force on Commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and Recognition and Commemoration of Indigenous History* - <https://hmhps.ca>).

Background: Why demonize Cornwallis?

The sometimes-fractious events leading up to the Task Force's formation in 2018 and subsequent actions by HRM and the Task Force show:

- ⌚ The outcome (recommendations) of the Task Force was preordained given the composition of the group that set its own processes and procedures and the less than open-minded approach in a 'reconstituted arms-length task force' of five indigenous and five non-indigenous members brought to the deliberations (some of whom had previously denigrated Cornwallis).
- ⌚ The debatable process/methodology and lack of rigor, balance and flawed metrics used to assess Cornwallis who was designated "person of national historic significance" in 1974. Most importantly, there was no acknowledgement of Cornwallis's foundational role in successfully establishing Halifax or, without diminishing the relevance of the 1749 bounty on Mi'kmaw warriors, any recognition of initiating a peace initiative with Chief Jean Baptiste Kopit in 1751 that led to the signing of the Peace and Friendship Treaty a year later in November with Governor Peregrine Hopson, and
- ⌚ The wording and tone of the Task Force's number 1 recommendation says it all/setting the stage for future actions, including street renaming: "*That the statue of Edward Cornwallis not be returned, under any circumstances to a position of public commemoration.*"

Way Forward: Inform, Educate.

- ⌚ Altering or replacing a name of a figure like Cornwallis is distinctly problematic because it threatens to erase an important factor in the history, culture and early development of Halifax and Nova Scotia.
- ⌚ Nova Scotians want to progress reconciliation, but not by diminishing/denigrating one group or individual to advance the interests of another. We can't ignore or revise our history based exclusively on today's values and standards; rather, we need to inform and educate.
- ⌚ Residents who support retaining the Cornwallis name on civic assets are encouraged to complete HRM online survey, <https://www.halifax.ca/home/surveys>, particularly Question 4. Optional and provide reasons for maintaining name, and/or contact their District Councillor.

**SPONSORED BY MEMBERS OF THE HALIFAX MILITARY HERITAGE
PRESEERVATION SOCIETY AND HRM RESIDENTS IN SUPPORT OF
MAINTAINING THE CORNWALLIS STREET NAME.**