

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JASON NUTT, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: CITY ASSET NAMING AND RENAMING POLICY

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager's Office recommends that the Council, by resolution, adopt Council Policy Number 000-XXX titled, "City Asset Naming and Renaming Policy" and rescind Council Policy 000-25 titled, "Park Naming Policy and Procedure." This item has no impact on current fiscal year budget.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City Manager's Office will present revisions to the draft policy presented to council at their July 22, 2025.

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform guidelines for naming and renaming of City of Santa Rosa (City) Assets. This policy is crafted to ensure that naming and renaming of City Assets reflect the City's rich historic and cultural values including the diversity, equity and inclusion for all community members and visitors. City Asset names should primarily honor places, history, persons, organizations, events and the natural environment with a focus on local significance and may also reflect California or national names when appropriate. If adopted, this policy will replace Council Policy 000-25, titled "Park Naming Policy and Procedure."

GOAL

This item relates to Council Goal #4 - Foster a Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive Community that creates a way to honor the City's rich historic and cultural values focused on places, history, persons, organizations, events and the natural environment most celebrated by City of Santa Rosa citizens.

BACKGROUND/PRIOR COUNCIL REVIEW

Over the past decade, both Council and community members have inquired about changing or altering names of existing city assets including streets, parks and buildings.

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While some policy and guidelines exist, specifically relating to parks and recreation facilities through Council Policy 000-25 titled "Park naming Policy and Procedure," the city does not have a comprehensive policy or guidance document for other city assets. This draft policy is intended to create a consolidated and comprehensive policy document for all City Assets.

This draft policy was initially presented on July 22, 2025, and Council requested that additional evaluation be given to specific sections and topics prior to returning.

ANALYSIS

The draft policy includes the following Sections:

1. Purpose
2. Definitions
3. Policy
 - 3.1. General Naming Criteria
 - 3.2. General Naming Provisions
4. Responsibility of Boards and Commissions
5. Process for Naming New, Unnamed or Renaming Existing City Assets
6. Process for Naming New City Streets
7. Ceremonial Street Naming
8. Memorial Recognitions
9. Removal of a Name

Following the initial presentation of this draft policy on July 22, 2025, Council requested further evaluation of key topics in the following sections. Proposed responses are as follows:

3.1.3 Outstanding Individuals

- Section 3.1.3.2. - The length of time required following an individual's passing to be considered for naming or renaming.
 - *Request: Evaluate the merits of incorporating this language.*
 - Response: The language has been modified to limit this requirement to only Park facilities. This is the most common and consistent approach from surveyed jurisdictions.

3.1.4 Major Donations

- Donation Threshold (Section 3.1.4.2.1)
 - *Request: Evaluate the rational for the donation threshold of equal to or greater than 50% of the engineer's estimate.*
 - Response: Evaluated alternatives; however, no changes made.
- Individual donors (Section 3.1.4.3)

- *Request: Evaluate how Section 3.1.3 Outstanding Individuals should be aligned in this Section in regard to family surnames, trusts, corporations, foundations.*
 - Response: See recommended changes with Section 3.1.3.
 - Response: Added Section 3.1.4.4. noting that family surnames, trusts, corporations, foundations do not need to comply with Section 3.1.3.
- Donation Agreement (Section 3.1.4.1)
 - *Request: Clarify how long a donor's name will be associated with a City Asset.*
 - Response: Added language to Section 3.1.4.6 noting that the Donation Agreement will establish the contractual time a donor's name will be associated with the City Asset.

5.1.2 Application

- Petition criteria
 - *Request: Ensure that the criteria is open and fair to all community members.*
 - Response: The criteria is consistent with best practice.
 - *Request: Remove petition requirement for Major Donations.*
 - Response: Section 5.1.2.2 has been added exempting Major Donations.

5.3 Public Outreach

- Fair and Equitable Outreach Efforts
 - *Request: Ensure that outreach efforts are used to reach the greatest possible and most diverse constituency possible.*
 - Response: Add other outreach tools to Section 5.3.1.
 - Response: Add Section 5.3.2 requiring physical onsite signage describing the naming or renaming request and the time and location of the upcoming public meeting.

5.5 Development and Implementation Cost

- Financial Responsibility
 - *Request: Evaluate options to making the applicant solely responsible for the development and implementation costs.*
 - Response: Added section 5.5.1 allowing council to waive all or some of applicant's development and implementation costs.

In addition, other minor language, style and grammar adjustments made throughout the policy document to correct minor errors and ensure consistency.

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FISCAL IMPACT

Adoption of this policy, in and of itself, will not result in any impact to the General Fund; however, Section 5.5 as presented could result in cost implications to the City as a function of a specific naming or renaming request. An appropriation request will be provided to council as a component of those specific final actions.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, the recommended action is not a “project” subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it does not have a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. In the alternative, the recommended action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Draft City Asset Naming and Renaming Policy – Redlined
- Attachment 2 – Major Donations Alternative
- Attachment 3 – Council Policy 000-25, “Park Naming Policy and Procedure”
- Attachment 4 – Draft City Asset Naming Application
- Resolution / Exhibit A - City Asset Naming and Renaming Policy

PRESENTER(S)

Jason Nutt, Assistant City Manager