

## COUNCIL POLICY

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### 1. PURPOSE

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 historic and cultural values including 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. Naming City Assets are intended to be intentional, forward thinking and transcend time and should be approached in a thoughtful and consistent manner.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **City Assets:** City owned City Facilities, Recreation Facilities, Street and Parks.
- 2.2. **City Facility (included in City Assets):** Any part of real property or structure owned by the City or for which naming rights are conferred by agreement, including, but not limited to Parks, libraries, Recreational Facilities buildings, parking facilities, interior or ancillary features that are a part of, or within, a larger facility and other City facilities.
- 2.3. **Ceremonial:** A non-official expression honoring an individual, philanthropic organization, significant event or landmark.
- 2.4. **Donor:** A person or other legal entity that proposes or provides a Donation or Gift to the City.
- 2.5. **Donation or Gift:** A monetary (cash) contribution, Endowments, personal property, real property, financial securities, equipment, in-kind goods or services, or any other city Asset that the city has accepted and for which the donor has not received any goods or services in return. For purposes of this Council Policy, the terms "donation" and "gift" shall be synonymous.
- 2.6. **Donor Acknowledgement:** Excluding naming, a donor acknowledgement is permanent writing on plaques, walls, stone carvings, pavers, bricks, electronic display, or interpretive signs that are temporary or permanent and are used to recognize the financial contribution of a donor.

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- 2.7. **Donation Agreement:** A legal agreement that serves as the formal expression of the terms of a gift to the organization, including the terms of the transfer of ownership records.
- 2.8. **Endowment:** A financial donation made with the intention of it being used in perpetuity.
- 2.9. **Funding:** Financial or in-kind resource to provide funding associated with a naming or renaming application.
- 2.10. **Memorials:** All markers, plaques, signs and other physical objects used to memorialize a deceased individual.
- 2.11. **Naming:** The selection and approval by the City Council for the initial naming of a new City Asset.
- 2.12. **Non-profit Organization:** An official 501(c)(3) or equivalent corporation or an association that conducts business for the benefit of the general public without shareholders and without a profit motive.
- 2.13. **Parks:** Any City owned land used for active or passive recreation, including, but not limited to, neighborhood parks, community parks, open space areas, trails and plazas.
- 2.14. **Recreational Facility (included in City Assets):** Major structures such as community centers, aquatic facilities, picnic shelters/pavilions, sports courts, entertainment attractions, athletic fields, community clubhouses and special use facilities (DeTurk Roundbarn and Church of One Tree).
- 2.15. **Renaming:** The selection and approval by the City for a new name of an existing City Asset.
- 2.16. **Street:** In conformance with Section 13-04.020 of this Code.

### 3. POLICY

This policy outlines the criteria, conditions, and procedures that govern naming and renaming of City Assets in order to maintain their integrity, retain long-standing significance, encourage philanthropic giving while acknowledging public investments, and

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safeguard against unwanted commercialization of City Assets. In selecting the name for a City Asset the following criteria shall be used.

**3.1. General Naming Criteria.**

- 3.1.1. Location. As a general policy, a name should assist the public in identifying its location. The City shall prioritize the name of the area’s natural features, community area, the names of nearby geographic features, and the names of adjacent schools and streets when it is considering a naming or renaming request.
- 3.1.2. Significant Events, People, and Places. The history of a major event, place, group or person may play an important role to preserve and honor a community’s history, landmarks, or prominent geographical features. The City may name a City Asset for a major event, place, or person or group of social, cultural or historical significance to the local area when the City Asset is associated with or located near the events, people, or places of social, cultural or historical significance. The relationship of the event, person, group, or place to the City Asset must be demonstrated through research and documentation.
- 3.1.3. Outstanding Individuals. To acknowledge individuals who have made substantial contributions to benefit the City, local community, park and recreation system, or public library.
  - 3.1.3.1. Naming or Renaming a City Asset for an outstanding individual is encouraged for those individuals whose significance and good reputation have been accepted in the community, City of Santa Rosa, State of California and/or United States of America.
  - 3.1.3.2. An individual to be honored at a Parks asset must have been deceased for at least 5 years prior to the date of application to ensure that the individual’s contributions and achievements will be considered objectively.
  - 3.1.3.3. Candidates who have already been honored through naming at one City Asset, whether ceremonial or official, may not be honored at another City Asset.

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- 3.1.3.4. If it is not appropriate to name the larger City Asset after an individual, then naming or renaming can be subordinate to the name of the larger City Asset or the City may name an area or portion of the City Asset after an individual, including but not limited to a meeting room, structure, fountain, or garden.
- 3.1.3.5. In considering the Naming or Renaming of a City Asset after an individual, priority will be given to those who made a sustained and lasting contribution to the City of Santa Rosa, State of California and/or United States of America.
- 3.1.4. Major Donations: The City has benefited from the generosity of residents, organizations, and businesses and wishes to continue acknowledging major donations and land dedications with recognition of their achievements and community contributions. While this generosity may warrant recognition through naming or renaming, it does not obligate the City to name a property, facility, or any part thereof to an individual, family, or organization.
  - 3.1.4.1. A Major Donation should benefit realization or completion of a new City Asset or significant improvement of an existing City Asset.
  - 3.1.4.2. A Donation Agreement shall be executed for all Major Donations.
  - 3.1.4.3. A Major Donation should provide “substantial” benefit to the City. The term “substantial” in this context is deliberately not defined by arbitrary standards to allow Council the opportunity to appropriately consider all reasonable requests; however, common examples of Major Donations include:
    - 3.1.4.3.1. A significant Donation, equal to or greater than 25% of the engineer’s estimate, for development of the City Asset including design, permitting, capital construction costs as well as furniture, fixtures and equipment as necessary depending on the City Asset type;
    - 3.1.4.3.2. A deed of land to the City, equal to or greater than 50% of the designated City Asset by the Donor; and/or

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3.1.4.3.3. A twenty-year Endowment, or longer, equal to or greater than 50% of the annual budget, for the continued maintenance and operations of the City Asset.

All ongoing endowment Donations shall include an escalator for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose area with a maximum increase equal to 50% of the annual budget for the continued operations and maintenance of the City Asset.

3.1.4.4. Donors seeking Naming or Renaming rights for Major Donations with respect to a specific individual must also comply with Section 3.1.3 of this policy.

3.1.4.5. Requests associated with family surnames, trusts, corporations, foundation or organizations do not need to comply with Section 3.1.3.

3.1.4.6. The City will not permit corporate logos, insignias, or advertising slogans in a permanent Naming or Renaming of a City Asset, except as allowed under Section 3.1.6 of this policy; and

3.1.4.7. The Donation Agreement must define the contractual period of time the Donor's name is guaranteed to be associated with the City Asset.

3.1.5. Themed Asset: Where a City Asset's function, operation, image or identification is based on a specific theme, then the City Asset name may reflect that theme.

3.1.6. Naming Rights: Naming rights differ from Naming and Renaming associated with a Major Donation and is not permitted on City Assets other than Council designated recreational facilities. Where designated, Council will issue an open solicitation inviting proposals. Following review and approval consistent with the City's Goals and Values, Council will authorize the negotiation of a naming rights agreement associated with an exclusive right to name the designated City Asset by making royalty payments or other benefits.

### 3.2. General Naming Provisions.

In considering proposals for the Naming or Renaming of a City Asset, the City will consider whether the proposed name will meet all of the following provisions:

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- 3.2.1. Engender a strong positive image consistent with the City's goals and values and intentionally honor the diverse representation of people in our community.
- 3.2.2. Be appropriate relative to the City Asset's location and/or history.
- 3.2.3. Incorporate the assigned historic name if the City Asset is a designated historical resource listed as a Santa Rosa local landmark, or on the State Register of Historic Resources, or National Register of Historic Places.
- 3.2.4. Have historical, cultural, or social significance to Santa Rosa or Sonoma County for the benefit of both current and future generations.
- 3.2.5. Commemorate places, people, or events that are of continued importance to the community, City of Santa Rosa, State of California and/or United States of America.
- 3.2.6. Have symbolic value that transcends and enhances the character and identity of the City Asset well into the future.
- 3.2.7. Have broad public support.
- 3.2.8. Not result in the excessive commercialization of the City Asset.

#### 4. RESPONSIBILITY OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Boards and Commissions represent the community and they have direct responsibility for various City Assets as prescribed in the City Charter and Santa Rosa Municipal Code. It shall be the responsibility of the following Boards and Commissions most closely related to certain City Assets to respond to and evaluate Naming and Renaming applications. Unless specifically delegated by the Charter or Code, Boards and Commission will make recommendations to the City Council for final consideration and approval.

- 4.1. Design Review and Preservation Board: City Facilities (Section 2.2) of historical significance.
- 4.2. Board of Public Utilities: City Facilities (Section 2.2) acquired, operated and maintained by the Santa Rosa Water Department
- 4.3. Board of Parks and Recreation: Parks (Section 2.13) and Recreation Facilities (Section 2.14)

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4.4. Community Advisory Board: Ceremonial (Section 2.3 and 2.16) street designations

4.5. Sonoma County Library Commission: City Facilities (Section 2.2) leased to the Sonoma County Library

**5. PROCESS FOR NAMING NEW, UNNAMED OR RENAMING EXISTING CITY ASSETS**

All applications to name a new or unnamed City Asset, other than a new street, shall submit a completed City Asset Naming/Renaming Request Application (Application) to the City Manager.

5.1. Application: A request to name a new or unnamed City Asset or rename an existing City Asset shall be initiated by one or more City resident(s), business owner(s), or property owner(s).

5.1.1. Applications must include reasons and/or justifications for the request as well as letters of support, articles, documents, and other evidence demonstrating broad-based community support for the Application.

5.1.2. Applications must include a petition, provided within 60 days of initiating the application, with at least:

5.1.2.1. At least 1,000 Santa Rosa resident signatories (electronic petitions accepted).

5.1.2.1.1. Including 50% or more of which live within a half mile of the City Asset; and

5.1.2.1.2. Including 50% of all registered property owners fronting the City Asset.

5.1.2.2. Applications associated with Major Donations are exempt from Section 5.1.2.1.

5.1.3. An application for Ceremonial street Naming may only be initiated by a resident or owner of a property abutting the street, neighborhood or community group or a current City Councilmember. Where initiated by a resident or owner, the application must include a petition per Section 5.1.2.1. Applications will follow the application procedures outlined in Section 7.2 of this policy.

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5.2. Review and Approval: The City Manager or designee reviews the Application for completeness before assigning it to the appropriate Board or Commission to initiate the procedure outlined below and decides whether to recommend that the process continue to the City Council. This five-step process is designed to ensure that the Application is properly vetted with the public, consistent with this and other City policies and capable of withstanding community change over time:

5.2.1. Step 1 - Board/Commission Meeting #1: Initial presentation on the City Asset and confirm naming criteria:

- Present the City Asset to be named, its location and any identifying features.
- Discuss and finalize naming criteria for the facility as outlined in Section 3 of this Policy.
- Application proponents will be asked to present their proposal.
- After criteria is confirmed and the Board/Commission recommend continuing to Step 2, staff should conduct public outreach described in Section 5.3 below to engage the community and solicit feedback on both the proposal as well as alternative proposals.
- Alternative proposals shall be submitted via application consistent with this policy.

5.2.2. Step 2 - Board/Commission Meeting #2: Review a list of names that meet the criteria:

- Staff present the entire list of available names, including the existing facility names list and new names generated from outreach.
- Staff recommends a shorter list of names that meets the criteria for Commission/Board review. The names on this list shall be thoroughly researched and vetted, particularly names of people.
- Board/Commission discusses and narrows down to short list of names and determines whether to proceed to Step 3.
- Application proponents must be present to respond to questions.

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- 5.2.3. Step 3 - Board/Commission Meeting #3: Final name choice to recommend to City Council:
- Board/Commission discusses a short list of names and may recommend one or two names to City Council for final approval or may recommend the naming or renaming not be approved.
  - Research and consultation with any affected group of the proposed name is strongly recommended.
- 5.2.4. Step 4 - City Council Meeting #1: Through a study session, Council will be presented with the naming proposal and recommendation of the Board/Commission, hear initial feedback from proponents and members of the public, ask additional questions, request additional studies or information and provide directive feedback.
- 5.2.5. Step 5 - City Council Meeting #2: The City Council will conduct a noticed public hearing to consider the final recommendation to name a City property or facility.
- 5.3. Public Outreach: Public outreach should extend beyond the standard meeting notifications as required by the Sunshine Ordinance with efforts made to involve a diverse group of stakeholders in the community, including residents who are historically underrepresented in City public discussions.
- 5.3.1. The meeting dates and opportunities for public input should be broadly marketed in consultation with staff and as requested or recommended by the Board/Commission or Council through a combination of print, radio, direct mailers, social media, email and community surveys.
- 5.3.2. Signage shall be posted at or along the City Asset in a conspicuous public place(s) 10 days prior to the first meeting date and include:
- 5.3.2.1. City Asset being considered for naming or renaming;
  - 5.3.2.2. Proposed City Asset name;
  - 5.3.2.3. Date, time and location of the upcoming meeting(s).
- 5.4. Depending on the nature of the application and request, the City Manager may, but is not required to, consolidate Steps 2 & 3 at the Board/Commission level and Steps 4 & 5 at the Council level to expedite the review and final decision.

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5.5. The cost for creation and installation of any new signage, plaques, monuments or replacement signage resulting from an approved Naming, Renaming or Ceremonial Naming process shall be borne by the application proponent(s).

5.5.1. Council may, at an application proponent(s) request, waive all or part of the creation and installation costs.

**6. PROCESS FOR NAMING NEW CITY STREETS (BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC)**

The Planning and Economic Development Department shall review and administratively approve all proposed names for new public and private streets as part of its review of Planning entitlements for new development and/or subdivisions.

Street naming conventions will align with the type, style and functional hierarchy as listed in the Street Design and Construction Standards.

**7. CEREMONIAL STREET NAMING**

As an alternative to permanently renaming a City-owned street, the City may wish to commemorate the service, lives and achievements of individuals, philanthropic groups of individuals or a landmark event affiliated with the City of Santa Rosa.

**7.1. Candidate Criteria:**

7.1.1. Candidates must exhibit a minimum of 10 years of community involvement or demonstrated an extraordinary, consistent and voluntary commitment to the community, or have had contributed significantly to the City of Santa Rosa, State of California and/or United States of America. Significant historic events or City of Santa Rosa landmarks may also be considered if supported by a significant and clearly defined cultural, humanitarian, or historical impact to the City where the individual(s) or event has had significant and clearly defined cultural, humanitarian or historic impact on the City.

7.1.2. An individual candidate must conform with criteria in Section 3.1.3.

7.1.3. Candidates who have already been honored on one street, whether ceremonial or official, may not be honored on another street.

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### 7.2. General Provisions:

- 7.2.1. Must apply to entire block(s) of public streets or intersection as described and justified in the application.
- 7.2.2. A Ceremonial street Naming application may only be initiated by:
  - 7.2.2.1. A resident or owner of a property abutting the street; or
  - 7.2.2.2. Neighborhood or community group; or
  - 7.2.2.3. A current City Councilmember.
- 7.2.3. A Ceremonial street name must not cause any disruption of the existing legal street name and abutting uses and shall be distinct from recognized community, district or neighborhood association street designations.
- 7.2.4. Candidates for Ceremonial street names shall be limited to the name of an individual, philanthropic organization, significant event or landmark.
- 7.2.5. Ceremonial street names shall not duplicate any currently existing official street names and shall be in the form of a "Sign Topper," which is a sheet metal sign placed on top a standard City street name sign and shall adhere to the following specifications:
  - 7.2.5.1. Ceremonial street naming cannot contain a product name or be used for a commercial purpose.
  - 7.2.5.2. A Ceremonial street Sign Topper must include the word "Honorary."
  - 7.2.5.3. No more than one (1) ceremonial Sign Topper per street block and up to five (5) per intersection.
  - 7.2.5.4. Only one Sign Topper may be placed on any pole.
  - 7.2.5.5. Sign Toppers shall not be attached to traffic signal poles or mast arms.
  - 7.2.5.6. No one candidate may receive City Council approval for a Sign Topper recognition on more than one street or intersection.

### 7.3. Process:

- 7.3.1. An applicant for a ceremonial street naming must complete a City Asset Naming/Renaming Request Application (Application) consistent with Section 5.1

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and submit to the City Manager. A map showing the proposed location of the entire street block(s) receiving the ceremonial street name. Fractions of blocks are not allowed.

- 7.3.2. If the application is approved by the City Manager, it will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration through the public review process as outlined in Steps 4 & 5 of Section 5.2 of this policy.
- 7.3.3. If a written protest against the ceremonial street naming has been signed by the residents or owners of twenty percent (20%) of all lots abutting the street, then a favorable vote of three-fourths of all City Councilmembers is required.
- 7.3.4. Sections 5.3 and 5.5 shall apply.
- 7.3.5. Ceremonial street name designation will be memorialized during the approval process by Council resolution.
- 7.3.6. The Ceremonial street name shall automatically end ten (10) years after the date of the resolution, as documented within the resolution, unless Council through their sole discretion adopts a new resolution extending the sunset date.
- 7.3.7. An applicant may re-apply for the ceremonial street name by the same process detailed in this policy.

8. MEMORIAL RECOGNITIONS

This section differs from Section 3 relating to donations, where the recognition of an individual is vetted through the public review process outlined in Section 5.2 of this policy.

The City has specifically designated City Assets that are identified and function as official Memorials, such as the Veterans Memorial at 100 Santa Rosa Avenue. Markers, plaques, signs and other physical objects used solely for the purpose of memorializing the life of an individual not officially approved by the City Council shall not be allowed at, on or adjacent to any City Asset within publicly owned property.

Previously authorized Memorials on or adjacent to a City Asset within publicly owned property shall be allowed to remain. This section shall not apply to or supersede the mission or policies of the Rural Cemetery or Luther Burbank Home and Gardens.

The City Manager or City Council may authorize submittal of an application for the creation of a designated Memorial (i.e. Veteran’s Memorial) based on the criteria included in Section

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3 of this policy. That application will be evaluated by Council through Steps 4 & 5 of Section 5.2.

9. REMOVAL OF A NAME

9.1. If at any time following the approval of a Naming or Renaming of a City Asset or memorial, circumstances change substantially so that the continued existence of the Naming of the City Asset may reflect poorly on the City, the City Council reserves the right to remove the name.

9.2. The City Manager shall evaluate the circumstances surrounding the issue and make a recommendation to the City Council as to whether the name should be retained or removed.

9.3. Circumstances that may lead to the removal of a name include:

9.3.1. The commission, or revelation of any past commission, of an egregious action by the Individual or group being memorialized.

9.3.2. A new understanding of the historical event being memorialized, that calls into question whether that event should still be considered notable or worthy of honor.

9.4. The City Council will have final approval on this matter.

9.5. If a name is removed under this section, Council will revert to the prior recognized name or adopt a temporary name and initiate the renaming process.

Adopted by Resolution No. RES-2025-164 Dated September 30, 2025