




**TO:** Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Claire V. Goodwin, Council Assistant for Policy Development, City Manager's Office  
Josh Diekmann, P.E. PTOE, Interim Public Works Director / City Engineer, Public Works   
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution – Amending the City's Policy on Place Names and Name Changes – August 2, 2022  
**DATE:** July 14, 2022

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**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

A resolution amending the City's Policy on Place Names and Name Changes to establish a process and criteria for consideration of official roadway naming requests and honorary roadway naming requests, and updating the process and criteria for consideration of all other naming requests of City-owned property, effective immediately.

**BACKGROUND:**

On July 23, 2019, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 40380 which directed the City Manager to review and make recommendations regarding the Place Names and Name Changes Policy by fall 2019.<sup>1</sup> The former Policy on Place Names and Name Changes scope included buildings, bridges, real property, and rights of way, including roadways. On August 20, 2019, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 40408 which amended the Policy on Place Names and Name Changes with regards to buildings and bridges, and other real property, though excluded roadways.<sup>2</sup> In 2019, the following changes were adopted under Resolution No. 40408:

- Established the Mayor's Office as the initial receiver of a naming request, rather than the Landmarks Preservation Commission;
- Established the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee as the primary reviewer of a naming request, rather than the Landmarks Preservation Commission;
- Added equity and inclusion as a naming criteria;
- Removed the restriction that prevented City property from being named after living individuals; and
- Removed roadway naming from the policy due to its complex nature and additional time needed to develop a policy.

The proposal under consideration incorporates official roadway naming requests and honorary roadway naming requests back into the Policy on Place Names and Name Changes, in addition to updating the process and criteria for consideration for all other naming requests of City-owned interests in real property, rights of way, and infrastructure. The proposed updates to the Policy on Place Names and Name Changes make the following changes:

1. Establishes clear application criteria and a review process for official roadway renaming and honorary roadway naming requests.
2. Establishes special criteria for honorary roadway naming requests originating from the Puyallup Tribe of Indians or designee within the boundaries of the 1873 survey area of the Puyallup Reservation.
3. Establishes the Mayor's Office as the initial receiver of roadway naming requests.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4066527&GUID=2AA79DB0-8658-428E-B47E-EDA093157079&Options=ID%7CText%7CAttachments%7COther%7C&Search=RES40380>

<sup>2</sup> <https://cityoftacoma.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4086763&GUID=71EC26FF-7CCF-4D02-B2D6-4D1AB31ED9CE&Options=ID%7CText%7CAttachments%7COther%7C&Search=RES40408>



4. Establishes a representative from the Public Works Department to serve as the coordinator for roadway naming requests to facilitate the review process, presentation to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee, and presentation to the City Council, if applicable. A representative from the City Manager's Office is designated for buildings, real property, and non-roadway rights of way naming requests.
5. Creates two internal ad hoc workgroups to review naming requests based on the naming category to ensure application materials for a naming request are complete and naming criteria is met.
6. Modifies the criteria and review process for buildings, real property, and non-roadway rights of way to align with the criteria and review process of roadway naming requests.
7. Provides clear options to the Council Committee and City Council on actions possible when presented with naming requests.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

Extensive background research and outreach among internal municipal departments were conducted to ensure clarity in process, sound criteria, and establish the key internal subject matter experts to participate in the ad hoc workgroups. Internal review and feedback were provided by the Public Works Department, the Office of Equity and Human Rights, the City Attorney's Office, the Planning and Development Services Department (including Historic Preservation), the Tacoma Police Department, the Tacoma Fire Department, the City Manager's Office, and the Government Relations Office.

This draft policy was also reviewed by external stakeholders including South Sound 911, Pierce Transit, and the Puyallup Tribal Council. The policy content regarding honorary naming requests initiated by the Puyallup Tribal Council or designee within the 1873 survey area of the Puyallup Reservation was developed in close coordination with staff representing the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. A letter of support for the draft Policy on Place Names and Name Changes is attached to this proposal from the Puyallup Tribal Council Chair on behalf of the entire Tribal Council. The letter acknowledges the thoughtful approach taken to support signage that promotes Lushootseed language revitalization efforts and affirms that City staff worked closely with the Tribe to ensure concerns were addressed and that Tribal sovereignty was respected in the policy.

#### **2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

##### **Equity and Accessibility:**

This policy will reduce inequities to under-represented communities by creating a clear process with specific criteria for all naming requests of City-owned property, whether proposed by members of the public, City officials, or elected officials. This policy advances diversity, equity, and inclusion through the following ways: 1) grants special consideration to applications initiated by the Puyallup Tribe on lands within the 1873 survey area of the Puyallup Reservation and acknowledges the historical and cultural importance of those lands to the Puyallup Tribe; 2) requires consultation with the Puyallup Tribe on any naming requests that could portray tribal significance; 3) permits proposals for honorary roadway naming in languages other than English, including in Lushootseed, and arranging translation services if needed to support City review; 4) requires that naming requests be reviewed for consistency with the City's stated policies and goals towards equity and inclusion; and 5) affirms that naming proposals may be conferred as a part of the City's ongoing efforts toward improving social and racial equity, inclusion, and reconciliation.

##### **Civic Engagement:** *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Representation at public meetings will reflect the diversity of the Tacoma community



**Livability:** *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity  
Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

**Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).**

This policy will increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma by providing a clear process on how the community may make a naming request for City property that is transparent, equitable, and fair. The policy will foster representation at public meetings that reflects the diversity of the Tacoma community by allowing public comment on naming requests under consideration at the Council Committee and City Council meetings should the proposal move forward. For official roadway naming requests, a public hearing is held which allows the community to provide input on a substantive change. The policy also increases the positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life by establishing a process for the community to make proposals to honor historical figures of Tacoma’s past, or educate the community on an individual or story that may not be well-known, and provide the opportunity to make a naming request to the City.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. No action	N/A	The City would continue to operate without an established roadway naming policy and ad hoc methods and processes for roadway naming considerations would ensue.
2. Adopt a stand-alone Roadway Naming Policy, rather than incorporate into the Policy on Place Names and Name Changes.	May be clearer for those individuals seeking information on only roadway naming.	Would create another policy and another document to track that is similar to an existing policy that previously applied to roadways (may create confusion). The process for considering naming requests would not be as aligned across all public property.

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

The lead representatives that will guide the naming requests through the consideration process will provide feedback to the project team on any changes to the policy needed to enhance the clarity or process. The ad hoc workgroups will also provide feedback to the project team on any changes needed to review naming requests accurately and applying the stated criteria in the policy. A future review of the policy is anticipated not sooner than one year after adoption to provide time to consider a variety of requests.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends City Council approve the Resolution amending the City’s Policy on Place Names and Names Changes to establish a process and criteria for consideration of official roadway naming requests and honorary roadway naming requests, and updating the process and criteria for consideration of all other naming requests of City-owned interests in real property, rights-of-way, and infrastructure, effective immediately.



**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The fiscal impacts of the policy are unknown, however, it is anticipated that there will be some fiscal impacts related to additional staff time needed to review materials and bring through the legislative process. The infrastructure needed for signage for successful roadway naming requests that Council adopts are generally at the expense of the applicant, rather than the City.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>TOTAL</b>			

**What Funding is being used to support the expense?**

No funding is requested.

**Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium’s current budget?**

YES  
Staff time required for participation in the ad hoc workgroup, for legal review, and to facilitate the naming request through the established process will be absorbed by the department in which the staff person is affiliated. Staff time required to implement this policy is anticipated to be minimal.

**Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?**

YES  
The City has several honorary roadway naming requests from the community awaiting passage of this policy. A new process would need to be established to consider those requests, should this draft policy not be implemented.

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**

YES

**Will the legislation change the City’s FTE/personnel counts?**

NO  
The anticipated impacted staff are aware of the policy and time commitments needed to implement the policy. The policy is not anticipated to require new FTEs, since the frequency of naming requests has historically been low.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Policy on Place Names and Names Changes
- Puyallup Tribal Council Letter of Support
- 1873 Survey Area of the Puyallup Reservation