



RESOLUTION NO. 40408

1 A RESOLUTION relating the City's *Policy on Place Names and Name Changes*;
2 amending the policy as recommended by the Infrastructure, Planning, and
3 Sustainability Committee.

4 WHEREAS the City's *Policy on Place Names and Name Changes*, last
5 updated in 2010, sets criteria and parameters around the naming of municipally
6 owned property and streets, and

7 WHEREAS the scope of the policy covers buildings and structures,
8 including overpasses, bridges and viaducts; real property, including open spaces
9 and parks; and rights-of-way, including, under certain circumstances, streets, and
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11 WHEREAS, since the last update, certain issues with the current policy
12 and its procedural process have been identified, including the following:

- 13 • The policy criteria are not well-aligned with current City policy
14 priorities, including the concepts of equity, inclusion, and
15 reconciliation, although a growing number of requests are driven by
16 these goals;
- 17 • The policy limits the discretion of the City Council, and instead
18 designates the Landmarks Preservation Commission as the primary
19 forum for the process, regardless of whether there is a historical
20 component to the request or whether the name change request is
21 sponsored or endorsed by the Mayor or Council Members;
- 22 • The policy is not well-suited for time-sensitive or noncontroversial
23 requests that already have the stated support of the City Council; and
- 24 • The policy pertaining to the naming of property after an individual
25 limits the practice to only those who have passed away,

26 and

27 WHEREAS, at the Council meeting of July 23, 2019, Mayor Woodards and
28 Council Member Mello co-sponsored Resolution No. 40380, directing the City
29 Manager to undertake a review of the policy to address these issues and
30 implement improvements to reduce the bureaucracy involved in this process, and



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WHEREAS, at its meeting of August 7, 2019, the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (“IPS”) Committee reviewed a series of proposed staff recommendations to the policy, including the following key changes:

- Naming requests will be initially sent to the Mayor, rather than the Landmarks Preservation Commission;
- Requests deemed appropriate for further consideration will be referred to the IPS Committee for review; the Committee may solicit input and feedback from relevant departments, commissions, and committees as appropriate to the request;
- New criteria encouraging and supporting initiatives focusing on equity, inclusion, and reconciliation are proposed;
- The limitation on namings that honor living persons is removed; and
- Street renaming is removed from the scope of the policy due to the complexity and impacts of such requests; a separate review of street renaming will be conducted by the Public Works Department,

and

WHEREAS the IPS Committee is recommending adoption of the proposed amendments to the *Policy on Place Names and Name Changes*; Now,

Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

That the proposed changes to the City’s *Policy on Place Names and Name Changes*, as recommended by the Infrastructure, Planning, and



1 Sustainability Committee, are hereby approved, all as more specifically set forth
2 in the attached Exhibit "A."

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4 Adopted _____

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Mayor

7 Attest:

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City Clerk

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11 Approved as to form:

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Deputy City Attorney

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EXHIBIT "A"

CITY OF TACOMA POLICY ON PLACE NAMES AND NAME CHANGES

SECTION 1: PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

1. In the event that the City of Tacoma wishes to confer a specific name on a municipally owned property ~~or street~~, the following policy is adopted.
2. The criteria contained within this policy should also be followed in reviewing or preparing the City of Tacoma's official comments or recommendations to State, Federal, and/or intergovernmental boards taking actions regarding geographic names, naming, or renaming.

SECTION 2: SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

1. This policy affects municipally owned property only.
2. The following types of municipally owned property are included within the scope of this policy (referred to hereafter as "property"):
 - a. Buildings and structures, including overpasses, bridges and viaducts
 - b. Real Property, including open spaces and parks
 - ~~c. Rights of Way, including under certain circumstances, streets~~
3. The process and criteria for naming or renaming municipally owned properties described in this policy do not apply to the following types of property:
 - a. Generally, Historically registered/designated properties for which a historic name has been indicated on a nomination form and accepted for use on a historic register, ~~including property on the Tacoma, Washington State, or National Registers of Historic Places are excluded from this policy, except when the City Council, in its discretion, determines that such a change supports a broad policy initiative.~~
 - b. Public art installations that have been commissioned and/or accessioned with a title that serves as the name of the piece.
 - c. Rights-of-way and streets.

SECTION 3: ~~INITIAL~~ GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERING NAME CHANGE REQUESTS

1. Naming proposals may be made by the Mayor or members of the City Council, or by the community via the Mayor's Office. When a proposal is received, the Mayor's designated staff will coordinate with the Executive Liaison to determine scheduling and next steps, as outlined in this policy.
 - a. The Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee is generally the committee that oversees the naming request process and makes recommendations to the City Council for naming requests.
 - b. When a proposal is received, the Council Committee may, at its discretion and depending on the nature of the request, seek input and feedback on the request with appropriate City Departments, Divisions, and Boards and Commissions, including:
 - Public Works, Traffic Engineering, and the Transportation Commission
 - Tacoma Fire Department, Police Department, and other appropriate public safety agencies

- Office of Equity and Human Rights
 - Planning and Development Services, Historic Preservation Office, and the Landmarks Preservation Commission
- c. Following its review, the Committee may make a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the proposal, or the Committee may defer if additional information is required, or deny the proposal if it does not appear to meet the criteria in this policy.
 - d. Upon receiving a recommendation from the Committee, the City Council may schedule a public hearing to receive comment for items of significant public interest.
 - e. Names given under this policy shall be presented via Council Resolution, except where applicable City, State, or Federal regulations require other specific legislation.
2. Naming requests from the community shall be submitted to the Office of the Mayor, who shall determine whether the proposal is appropriate according to the criteria in this policy for additional consideration to the Council Committee as described above. Proposals that do not appear to meet the criteria or that do not appear to be of benefit to the City or its residents may be removed from further consideration.
 3. Request to the Mayor made by the community shall be submitted in writing, and should, at a minimum, include:
 1. ~~Requests for name changes to existing property may be submitted by any Tacoma resident, property owner, or City official. Such a proposal shall be made in writing to the Landmarks Preservation Commission and include:~~
 - a. A map illustrating the area affected by the proposal.
 - b. Any existing place, street or facility names that would be affected.
 - c. Any common usage names or nicknames for the area or its elements, including topographical landmarks.
 - d. Representative photographs of the area.
 - e. ~~An overview of any public outreach or support received for the proposal to date, including media coverage and meetings; and~~
 - f. A statement of the criteria in this policy that apply to the request, and how the proposal meets these criteria.
 - g. A summary of any public outreach conducted to date, including to neighborhood associations, Neighborhood Councils, Business District Associations, and commercial property owners' groups, media coverage, or public meetings. This may include any statements of support or endorsement received. Applicants are encouraged to seek public support prior to submitting a request for name changes.
 - h. A description of any plans for interpretive measures to be taken by the sponsor if the naming request is approved, including signs, interpretive panels, or markers.
 2. ~~The Landmarks Preservation Commission, upon receiving such a request, shall review the proposal for completeness at its next available Commission agenda.~~
 3. ~~If the request is considered complete, the Commission may take action to schedule the request for a public hearing following its normal public hearing procedures.~~
 4. ~~If more information is required, the Commission shall defer scheduling of the request and describe to the proponent what information is needed to complete the request.~~

- ~~5. If no action is taken to schedule the request for a public hearing within 60 days of the first consideration of the request, it is considered denied. The Commission may also vote to deny the request.~~
- ~~6. If the Commission denies the application by vote or by failure to act, the Commission shall not consider the request for the period of one calendar year.~~
- ~~7. If the Commission denies a request, the Mayor may, for any reason, direct the Commission to reconsider its action.~~
- ~~8. Following its public hearing, there shall be a mandatory 30 comment period.~~
- ~~9. After the close of the comment period, the Commission shall review the testimony and written comments, and the criteria contained within this policy, and forward a recommendation to the appropriate City Council Committee for further consideration.~~
4. Naming proposals should be reviewed for consistency with the City's stated policies and goals toward equity and inclusion.
5. At its discretion, the City Council may adopt alternate or special procedures for Council-sponsored name changes.

SECTION 4: INITIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERING NAMING REQUESTS FOR NEW NAMES

- ~~1. For new or unnamed City owned properties, the City Council may make a new naming request directly to the Landmarks Preservation Commission.~~
- ~~2. When so directed, the Landmarks Preservation Commission shall publicly solicit ideas for naming new facilities, except where otherwise indicated in this policy.~~
- ~~3. Such a call for proposals shall minimally take the form of a press release, website posting, and distribution of an announcement to the Commission's mail and electronic distribution lists. The call for proposals shall state a timeline for submission and review, as well as the criteria for naming contained in this policy.~~
- ~~4. The purpose of the solicitation is to develop a broad array of ideas, and to encourage community participation in the naming process.~~
- ~~5. While an individual may directly propose to the Landmarks Preservation Commission consideration of a particular name for a property, such a request is not required to initiate the naming process for new facilities, nor is the Commission's consideration of names limited to that proposed by an individual.~~
- ~~6. The naming process shall be initiated as soon as practical in the development process.~~

SECTION 5: PUBLIC HEARING REQUIRED

- ~~1. For both renaming requests, and names for new facilities, the Commission shall hold a minimum of one public hearing to receive comments on all naming requests.~~
- ~~2. Notice shall be published in the newspaper as well as sent via regular mail and electronic mail to interested stakeholders no less than 14 days ahead of the scheduled hearing.~~
- ~~3. Interested stakeholders include property owners and occupants within a 400' radius of the subject property, recognized neighborhood and business groups, and parties included on the Landmarks Preservation Commission's contact lists. Other groups or individuals may be contacted as well.~~

4. ~~Following the public hearing, the Commission shall keep the public record open for 30 days minimum to allow for additional comment.~~
5. ~~Following the close of the comment period, the comments received shall be compiled by the Commission and findings made relative to the proposal and the applicable criteria, and a recommendation made to the Council via the appropriate Council Committee.~~

SECTION 6: RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL

1. ~~Based on the findings and recommendation of the Commission, the City Council Committee, at its discretion, may accept, modify, reject or remand the recommendation of the Commission, or may recommend to the full Council that an additional public hearing should be held.~~
2. ~~If the Council Committee finds that the Commission should reconsider the proposal due to errors in application of criteria or procedure, or if relevant factors were not considered, the Council Committee may remand the decision for further consideration.~~
3. ~~If the Commission recommendation is accepted, a resolution will be prepared with a sponsor, incorporating the Commission's recommendation.~~
4. ~~Otherwise, if the Commission recommendation is modified or rejected, the Council Committee may send an alternative proposal to full Council as a sponsored resolution.~~
5. ~~In all cases, the City Council will have the prerogative of accepting or rejecting the proposal.~~
6. ~~The City Council shall approve or disapprove of any naming or renaming action by resolution.~~
7. ~~Once a name has been officially approved by the City Council, changes should be strongly discouraged.~~

SECTION 74: NAMING CRITERIA FOR THE CITY COUNCIL AND LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION TO CONSIDER

~~The City Council and Landmarks Preservation Commission shall use the following criteria are recommended for the City Council's consideration when considering potential naming proposals to name or change the name of a public facility or building:~~

1. ~~To avoid duplication, confusing similarity or inappropriateness, the Commission, in considering name changes, shall review existing building and facility names. New names should avoid duplicating or reusing names that are already used in other locations.~~
2. ~~Context, and geographical location, and natural or geological features. Names may be based on location or distinctive, predominant, and defining natural or geological features of an area. Such proposals Sites and facilities should be given names that directly reflect or are contextually related to the history of the site.~~
 - a. ~~Common usage names that have developed over time shall be favored. Facilities may be given official designations based on common usage by residents of an area, such as topographical features, nearby schools, or historical plat names.~~
 - b. ~~Names of features indicated on general usage maps for fifty years or more (National Register age criteria) should only be changed under exceptional circumstances when the proposed name is supported by other City policies, priorities, or initiatives.~~
3. ~~Natural or Geological Features. Names may be based on distinctive, predominant and defining natural or geological features of an area.~~

43. Historical Significance. A facility may be given a name based on historical significance if it meets one of the following criteria:
- a. The name is associated with a historically significant event or for events reflecting broad patterns of Tacoma’s history;
 - b. The name is associated with the lives of persons of citywide significance in Tacoma’s past; ~~or~~
 - c. The name reflects a distinctive architectural or engineering achievement;
 - d. The name is related to an existing or proposed registered historic property or district; or
 - e. The name would highlight previously under-documented or poorly understood historical narratives.
4. Equity, inclusion, and reconciliation. New names and name changes may be conferred as a part of the City’s ongoing efforts toward improving social and racial equity, inclusion, and reconciliation.
5. Contributions. New facilities may be named for an individual or organization if that individual or organization has made a significant direct property or monetary contribution to the City of Tacoma, consistent with the City’s relevant acceptance policies, ~~a~~ for purposes of developing that particular building or facility, and the naming is a stipulation of the donation.
6. Civil Service. Properties may be named for individuals who have enhanced the quality of life for Tacoma residents through outstanding public service, including:
- a. Leadership in civic organizations devoted to community improvement;
 - b. Outstanding humanitarian work, such as assistance for the underprivileged, economically disadvantaged, and the disabled populations of the City; and
 - c. Leadership in events and programs that have broadly enriched the quality of life for Tacoma residents.
67. Portions of a facility may have another name than that of the entire facility or features may be dedicated to or in honor of a person such as “Tide Pool – Cecil Brosseau” and “Owen Beach” at Point Defiance.

~~SECTION 8: SPECIAL CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS~~

1. ~~Individuals.~~ ~~Except where otherwise indicated, facilities and public property ordinarily shall not be named for living individuals.~~
2. ~~Streets.~~ ~~Official renaming of existing streets, in general, is discouraged except when:~~
 - a. ~~A naming effort is part of a larger, coordinated and planned effort involving multiple streets or blocks; or~~
 - b. ~~Proposals to rename existing streets for individuals may be considered for those persons that have a broad, regional or national significance that is generally recognized by Tacoma residents~~
3. ~~Street Renaming Requirements.~~
 - a. ~~Renaming of existing streets shall only occur at existing shifts in the street grid or where there are clear topographical or geographical shifts in the grid.~~
 - b. ~~The City Real Property Services Division, Public Works Traffic Engineering, Community and Economic Development Buildings and Land Use Service Division, and the Law~~

~~Enforcement Support Agency shall be given a copy of any street naming request prior to the scheduling of a public hearing on the matter.~~

- ~~c. A signed petition of 51% by linear frontage of the affected property owners in support of the renaming must be solicited and submitted by the proponents of the renaming prior to consideration by the City. Such a petition shall be implemented at the sole expense of the proponent(s); however, the City may provide a list of affected taxpayers of record.~~

~~4. Street Renaming Alternatives.~~

- ~~a. Organizations are encouraged to consider alternatives to street renaming requests for the commemoration of individuals or organizations. For example, interpretive plaques at key locations on buildings or sites, or where appropriate, in sidewalks or other visible pedestrian areas.~~
- ~~b. In some cases, an "Honorary Street" designation may be given to certain sections of existing streets to commemorate the lives of important community members. A commemorative street blade sign may be mounted below the official street name for a defined length of the street, if approved, at the expense of the applicants. "Honorary designations" of streets may be considered as requests for renaming of facilities.~~
- ~~c. For "Honorary Street" designations, the City shall develop and provide a standard sign specification for approved requests.~~