



City of Sonoma

NAMING AND DEDICATION OF CITY PROPERTY AND INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

Purpose & Legal Authority:

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and consistent guidelines for the naming or renaming of City-owned facilities, which is broadly defined to include property, parks, public facilities, landmarks, infrastructure (such as bridges), and programs; and for dedicating these facilities in honor of individuals, groups, entities, events, and history that have made significant contributions to the City of Sonoma.

This policy does not apply to the naming of new streets within the development of new subdivisions, which follows the City's planning processes. This policy also does not apply to the naming of new public art works, which follows the procedures under Chapter 19.51 of Title 19 of the Sonoma Municipal Code.

Legal Authority

The City Manager is granted the authority to evaluate requests for naming or dedication and to recommend the appropriate type of dedication, including but not limited to signage, notifications, and ceremonies. The City Manager may choose from a variety of methods, such as plaques, signs, public announcements, or events, based on the significance of the contribution or dedication opportunity. However, the final decision regarding naming or dedication will be made by the Sonoma City Council.

I. Criteria for Recommendation

When evaluating requests for naming or dedication, the City Manager shall consider the following criteria:

1. Significance of Contribution

The impact of the individual, group, entity, event, or history on the City of Sonoma, including historical significance, civic engagement, or notable achievements. All names shall focus on significance to the City of Sonoma, but names that reflect California or national history may be approved if such contributions are applicable to the City of Sonoma."

2. Consistency with City Values

Alignment of the proposed name or dedication with the City of Sonoma's values, goals, and policies.

3. Historical and Cultural Relevance

Consideration of the historical or cultural relevance of the proposed name or dedication, ensuring it reflects the heritage and diversity of the community.

4. Community Impact

The potential impact of the naming or dedication on the community, including its relevance to current and future residents.

5. Financial Considerations

The financial implications of the dedication, including costs associated with signage, ceremonies, or other forms of recognition, and the availability of funds or sponsorships to cover these costs. The donation of land or facilities does not create an obligation for the City to name the land or facility after the donor, though such donation may be considered under this factor.

Procedures

1. **Request Submission:** Requests for naming or dedication may be submitted in writing to the City Manager or through verbal direction by the City Council during a public meeting. In either case, the request should include the proposed name or dedication, background information, and justification for the naming or dedication based on the criteria outlined above.
2. **City Manager Review:** The City Manager will review each request against the established criteria and determine the appropriate type of dedication to recommend to the City Council. This may include consulting with relevant City departments, committees, other stakeholders, or legal counsel. Submissions will be given the same consideration regardless of the nomination source. Special care and sensitivity will be taken in consideration of submissions to rename an existing facility named for an individual, group, entity, or event of historical significance.
3. **City Council Consideration:** The City Manager will make a recommendation to the City Council that includes discussion of the criteria outlined above at a public meeting of the City Council. The public will have the opportunity to provide input during the public meeting process when the item is considered by the City Council.
4. **City Council Decision:** The City Council will make the final decision on whether to proceed with official naming or dedication, based on the City Manager's recommendation, and the established criteria, including any public input.
5. **Implementation:** Upon approval by the City Council, the City Manager will oversee the implementation of the dedication, including the production and placement of signage, notifications, or the organization of any ceremonies.

Review and Amendment

This policy will be reviewed every five years to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. The City Manager may recommend updates or amendments to this policy to the City Council based on feedback, changes in community needs, or legal requirements.