TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY SERVICES

DATE: APRIL 12, 2004 CMR: 217:04

SUBJECT: POLICY AND SERVICES RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL TO REVISE CITY POLICY 1-15: NAMING AND RENAMING CITY-OWNED LAND AND FACILITIES

RECOMMENDATION
The Policy and Services Committee and staff recommends that the City Council adopt the attached revised Policy 1-15 for the naming and renaming of City-owned land and facilities which:

a) Includes additional specific criteria for the naming of lands or facilities in honor of individuals;
b) Includes a role in the recommendation process for the Parks and Recreation Commission, or other appropriate commissions;
c) Creates a new name suggestion form and provides a process for transmitting historical information on the facility to Council as part of the recommendation process;
d) Establishes a process and evaluation criteria for renaming facilities or City-owned lands; and
e) Revises the review process for names of facilities within parks, or rooms within facilities that are suggested by the City Manager.

Further, the Policy and Services Committee recommends that the City Council direct staff to explore alternative methods, other than naming of facilities or City-owned land, for recognizing individuals who have made a significant contribution to the community.

COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS
The Policy and Services Committee (Committee) voted unanimously to accept staff’s recommendation to revise Policy 1-15 with the following amendments:

• Addition of a policy statement to clarify that when naming a facility in honor of a person, the intent is to ensure that the individual has made significant and lasting contributions to the community.
• Names for rooms within facilities and areas within parks, which are currently designated by the City Manager, shall be formally confirmed by the City Council via the Consent Calendar.
• The role of the project manager was expanded to include notification of the Palo Alto Historical Association (PAHA), appropriate commissions, neighborhood associations, and persons who have submitted name suggestions.
• The naming criteria, relating to names with geographic, environmental (relating to natural or physical features), historic or landmark connotation, was expanded to say that the name should either have or preserve the connotation.
• Names do not necessarily need to be in memoriam.
• In addition to recognizing names associated with a property or facility’s former name as a school, other types of property with names familiar to the community will be given consideration in preserving such familiar names.
• Recommendations from PAHA should be submitted to the City Council as part of the staff report, in addition to the recommendations of the reviewing Commission or Committee.

The Policy and Services Committee agreed with comments from the Parks and Recreation Commission, PAHA, and members of the public who spoke at the Committee meeting that there should not be a stipulation that City-owned land and facilities be named in memoriam for individuals. The Committee clarified that names honoring individuals or families, other than those of recognized historic importance, must be supported by compelling reasons.

The Committee discussed ways to recognize and honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the community and deemed the naming of City streets (Policy 1-16, Naming of City Streets) as another appropriate way to honor distinguished citizens.

After considering comments made by the public, the Committee supported the recommendation that a City policy should be established and that the name of any existing facility or City-owned land, particularly one whose name has City or regional significance, not be changed unless there are compelling reasons to do so. The Committee removed the caveat recommended by staff that facilities or City-owned land could only be renamed if there was no other new facility or portion of a park or facility that could be named for the individual.

Wording changes suggested by the Committee were incorporated into the attached revised policy (Attachment 2). The application for naming or renaming City-owned lands or facilities (Attachment 3) was modified to reflect all of the outlined changes recommended by the Policy and Services Committee.
The Committee voted unanimously to accept staff’s recommendation that staff should be directed to explore alternative methods, other than naming of parks, facilities or streets, for recognizing individuals who have made significant contributions to the community.

Staff will gather detailed information on options for a ‘Wall of Honor’ or ‘Walk of Honor,’ similar to the recognition programs conducted by the cities of Burlingame, San Jose, Foster City and Rancho Palos Verdes. Staff will return to the Policy and Services Committee in summer for the review of recommended new programs.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: CMR 169:04  
Exhibit A: Draft Revised Policy 1-15  
Exhibit B: Draft Name Suggestion Form  
Attachment B: Final Revised Policy 1-15  
Attachment C: Final Name Suggestion Form  
Attachment D: Draft Policy and Services Committee Minutes, March 9, 2004

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