

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-49

A Resolution adopting a standardized naming policy for City facilities.

RECITALS:

WHEREAS, the City has a number of buildings, facilities, parks, public spaces, and other municipal assets; and

WHEREAS, the City currently lacks a systemic process for the naming and renaming of the aforementioned places; and

WHEREAS, one of the Goals of the City's adopted Strategic Plan included the creation of a naming policy for City facilities; and

WHEREAS, creating a policy framework for the naming and renaming of these facilities would encourage community engagement and inclusion, seek to celebrate the uniqueness and vibrancy of the City, reduce the risk of potential bias or arbitrariness, and promote transparency; and

WHEREAS, the proposed policy for naming and renaming seeks to implement a framework to implement these transparency and risk reduction benefits.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF McMinnville, OREGON, as follows:

1. The attached Policy for the Naming and Renaming of City-Owned Buildings, Facilities, and Public Spaces is adopted for use in the City.
2. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage and shall continue in full force and effect until modified, revoked, or replaced.

Adopted by the Council of the City of McMinnville at a regular meeting held the 25th day of August, 2026 by the following votes:

Ayes: Cunningham, Tucholsky, Benner, Geary, Peralta

Nays: Chenoweth

Approved this 25th day of August 2026.



MAYOR

Approved as to form:



City Attorney

Attest:



City Recorder

EXHIBITS:

- A. Naming and Renaming Policy

City of McMinnville

Policy for the Naming and Renaming of City-Owned Buildings, Facilities, and Public Spaces

I. Purpose

This policy is designed to establish a fair, transparent, and consistent process for naming and renaming City-owned buildings, facilities, parks, public spaces, and other municipal assets by:

- Promoting names that reflect the community's identity, geography, history, and civic values.
- Ensuring public participation in naming decisions.
- Providing objective criteria for evaluating naming proposals.
- Preserving public confidence by avoiding decisions that may be perceived as political, divisive, or premature.

II. Applicability

This policy applies to the naming or renaming of all City-owned buildings, parks, facilities, public spaces, trails, plazas, structures, and other analogous publicly owned improvements (referred to in this policy as “City Assets”), except where otherwise governed by state or federal law, grant requirements, or contractual obligations. This does not apply to other types of City property, such as vehicles.

III. Naming Principles

Whenever practicable, names should emphasize community identity rather than individuals. Preferred naming categories include:

- Geographic features or locations.
- Neighborhoods or districts.
- Historical events of unique significance to the City of McMinnville.
- Natural features such as rivers, hills, trees, or wildlife.
- Functional or descriptive names that identify the facility's purpose.
- Indigenous or historically significant place names, where appropriate and developed in consultation with appropriate Tribal governments or cultural organizations.

When a City Asset is associated or located near a place or event of historical or social significance, as demonstrated through research and documentation, naming the City Asset after such place or event will be considered.

IV. Naming After Individuals

The City has benefited, through its evolution, from the contributions made by many outstanding individuals. Naming a City Asset after an individual is an exceptional honor and should occur only under the following circumstances:

- The individual's legacy has demonstrated enduring and positive significance;
- The individual made exceptional contributions to the City, region, state, or nation; and
- The proposed name is unlikely to become inconsistent with the City's values due to incomplete historical understanding.

Employment by the City alone shall not constitute sufficient justification for naming a facility after an individual.

V. Prohibited Naming Considerations

Names should not:

- Promote political campaigns or partisan interests;
- Advertise commercial products or businesses unless specifically authorized through a Council-approved sponsorship or naming rights agreement;
- Duplicate or be overly similar to existing City Asset names;
- Include language that is discriminatory, offensive, or inconsistent with the City's adopted values; or
- Create confusion for emergency services, navigation, or public communications.

VI. Naming Proposals

A naming or renaming proposal may be initiated by:

- The City Council.
- The City Manager.
- A City advisory board or commission.

Each proposal shall be in writing and must include:

- Unambiguous identification of the City Asset at issue.
- The proposed name.
- The rationale for the name.
- Documentation supporting eligibility under this policy.
- Any historical or cultural significance.

Individuals or groups who wish to initiate a facility naming or renaming under this policy should petition the City Council or another City Board/Commission with their ideas and recommendations.

VII. Review Process

The City Manager shall review each proposal for completeness and consistency with this policy.

The City Manager will refer qualifying proposals to a City Board or Committee with relevant scope or experience who will work with the head of the department responsible for the City Asset or their designee; and

The Dept Head and committee shall evaluate proposals using the criteria contained in this policy and may:

- Solicit additional information.
- Request historical verification.
- Seek consultation from historians, cultural organizations, Tribal representatives, or other subject matter experts.
- Recommend one or more names.
- Recommend that no action be taken.

VIII. Recommendation to City Council

Following committee review, the committee shall submit a written recommendation to the City Council that includes:

- The recommended name.
- A summary of alternatives considered.
- An evaluation of the proposal against the criteria in this policy.

- A summary of public comments received.

The City Council retains sole authority to approve, deny, or modify any naming proposal by resolution.

IX. Names of Existing Facilities and Renaming

This does not purport to change the existing name of any City Asset established before the effective date of this policy. Existing historical or commonly used place names will be preserved wherever possible. Renaming an existing City Asset shall occur in accordance with this document's criteria. Such a renaming should occur only for compelling reasons following community engagement and supported by findings. These include but are not limited to:

- Correction of historical inaccuracies.
- Removal of names inconsistent with community values.
- Significant changes in facility purpose.
- Consolidation or redevelopment.
- Recognition of extraordinary community interest.

X. Naming Rights Agreements

Nothing in this policy prohibits the City Council from approving sponsorships, naming for major donations, or other naming rights agreements for City Assets when such agreements serve the public interest and comply with applicable laws and City procurement policies. Such agreements shall be considered separately from honorary naming under this policy.

XI. Policy Review

This policy may be reviewed periodically by the City Council and may be amended as necessary to reflect evolving community values and best practices.