



CITY of WILMINGTON North Carolina

ITEM R1

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9/21/2021

City Council
City Hall
Wilmington, North Carolina 28401

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers:

Attached for your consideration is a resolution adopting an updated city policy on the Naming and Renaming of City Streets, Programs, Facilities and Property, and the Placement of Private Memorials on City Property. Development of this policy included extensive community and staff engagement, and input and guidance from the Naming Facilities Council Committee and the Council's Governance Committee.

City Council approved a Fountainworks policy formation and meeting facilitation professional services contract at its February 2, 2021, meeting. Community input was gathered in the beginning and towards the end of the policy development process using two rounds of citizen focus group meetings. A diverse group of residents and community members participated in the two focus group sessions.

Input was gathered from the Council Naming Facilities Committee members at the start of the process, as well. Further, Council met in a special meeting (Naming Facilities Council Committee and Council's Governance Committee) on May 17, 2021 to receive a draft presentation.

The City's current policies regarding the above matters are set forth in the below policies and resolutions:

- City of Wilmington Special Events Policy – adopted January 22, 2019;
- City of Wilmington Sponsorship Policy – adopted October 16, 2018;
- City of Wilmington Resolution Amending the Policy for Naming Facilities and Public Spaces - adopted October 21, 2014;
- City of Wilmington Resolution Amending City Policy for Naming and Renaming of Streets or Alleys - adopted June 17, 2003; and
- Universal Addressing Standards & Procedures Manual - adopted by the City of Wilmington on August 6, 2002.

If a specific naming is within the scope of the City's Special Events Policy or its Sponsorship Policy, those policies shall govern and the Policy on the Naming and Renaming of City Streets, Programs, Facilities and Property, and the Placement of Private Memorials on City Property shall be advisory only. The effect of approving the City of Wilmington Street & Facilities Naming and Renaming, and Private Memorials Policy is the policy shall become effective immediately. The Planning Staff will be the City Manager's designee and such staff will be the primary point of intake and contact.

Passage of the attached Resolution is recommended.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony N. Caudle,
City Manager

Resolution



City Council
City of Wilmington
North Carolina

Introduced By: Anthony N. Caudle, City Manager

Date: 9/21/2021

Resolution Adopting City Policy on the Naming and Renaming of City Streets, Programs, Facilities and Property, and the Placement of Private Memorials on City Property

LEGISLATIVE INTENT/PURPOSE:

WHEREAS, individual matters and issues regarding the names and naming (including the renaming or alteration of existing names) of public property, including programs, facilities, and streets has become more prevalent and subject to debate; and

WHEREAS, the issue of the donation, acceptance, and placement of private memorials has become more prevalent and subject to debate; and

WHEREAS, the City's current policies regarding the above matters are set forth in a number of policies and Resolutions including:

- City of Wilmington Special Events Policy - adopted January 22, 2019;
- City of Wilmington Sponsorship Policy - adopted October 16, 2018;
- City of Wilmington Resolution Amending the Policy Governing the Guidelines for Naming Facilities and Public Spaces adopted October 21, 2014;
- City of Wilmington Resolution Amending City Policy for Naming and Renaming of Streets or Alleys adopted June 17, 2003;
- Universal Addressing Standards & Procedures Manual, adopted by the City of Wilmington adopted August 6, 2002;
- The Universal Addressing Standards & Procedures Manual (2002); and

WHEREAS, the City of Wilmington contracted with Fountainworks in February of 2021 for assistance in policy review and facilitation of public input in order to update the City's policy; and

WHEREAS, City Council received a presentation on the work performed and recommendations of Fountainworks at its July 20, 2021 meeting; and

WHEREAS, based on feedback provided by the public, Fountainworks, and City Council, a proposed amended and updated policy is attached hereto for City Council consideration; and

WHEREAS, the attached policy, by its own wording and scope, shall not apply to instances or matters that are governed by the following City Policies or Programs:

- Special Events Policy
- Sponsorship Policy
- Trees Forever Program

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT, the attached Wilmington Street & Facilities Naming and Renaming, and Private Memorials Policy is hereby adopted by City Council and shall become effective immediately.

Adopted at a _____ meeting
on _____ 2021

Bill Saffo, Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Penelope Spicer-Sidbury, City Clerk

City Attorney

Wilmington Street and Facility Naming and Renaming, and Private Memorials Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear and transparent guidance in the renaming and honorific naming of City streets (excluding the naming of streets in new developments), renaming of City Facilities, and placement of Privately Funded memorials on public property.

Background

- a. The City of Wilmington recognizes that the naming of city infrastructures such as streets, buildings, parks, and other facilities provides a means to honor those that have made significant contributions to our city, the state of North Carolina, or the country. The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, consistent, transparent, and fair process for the naming and renaming of public facilities and streets, as well as the placement of privately funded memorials on public land.
- b. The city recognizes that, from time to time, a certain individual or organization may make historical, cultural, or other important contributions to the city, the State of North Carolina, or the United States that merit recognition by naming, renaming, or dedicating a city Street or public facility, in their honor. However, to preserve the prestige and honor that naming and renaming bestows and to minimize disruption or confusion, naming and renaming should be rare.
- c. As related to the City's Rise Together Initiative, this policy is intended to contribute to the diversity, inclusion, and equity of the community, and to Wilmington's mission to live up to its full potential as a place where citizens from every corner and walk of life share in the same opportunity for prosperity, participation, and quality of life.

Scope:

This policy shall apply to and govern the naming (including the renaming or alteration of an existing name, whether official or honorific) of all City owned or maintained streets, programs, facilities, and property whether real or personal, and regardless of the impetus for such naming whether internal, by outside request, or otherwise. In the event that a specific naming is within the scope of the City's Special Events Policy or its Sponsorship Policy, those policies shall govern and this policy shall be advisory only.

Additionally, this policy applies to any proposed placement of a privately funded or provided memorial or monument on public property owned, controlled, or maintained by the City. In the event that a specific memorial is within the scope of the City's Trees Forever Program, that policy shall govern.

Definitions:

Program: Ongoing or one-time activities or events, typically recreational or educational, provided, initiated, or co-promoted by the City of Wilmington.

Street: The entire width between property lines of any public alley, avenue, highway, lane, path, road, sidewalk, way, or other public place located within the City when any part thereof is open to the use of the public for ingress, egress, or travel.

Private memorial: Any object of remembrance or monument that is funded or donated in any part, by a non-government person or entity, which is proposed for placement upon public property owned, controlled, or maintained by the City.

1.0 Privately Funded Memorials on Public Land

- 1.1** Upon the adoption of this policy, the City will no longer accept donations or loans of private memorials to be placed on public property.
- 1.2** Existing memorials are exempt from this policy unless otherwise determined at the discretion of the Council.
- 1.3** This policy does not prohibit the City from placing art, objects of remembrance, or memorials on public land that are wholly provided by public funds. The City may solicit and accept the donation of funds to defray the costs of these types of projects that the City commissioned. All such memorials commissioned and placed by the City are expressly adopted as the speech of the City.

2.0 Criteria for Naming and Renaming Streets and Facilities

- 2.1** Because the naming (honorific or otherwise) and renaming of City streets, programs, facilities, and property should be approached cautiously with forethought and deliberation, the evaluation and selection of names for City Facilities shall comply with the criteria set forth below:
 - 2.1.1** Streets and Facilities can be named after individuals and groups, as well as other characteristics (such as natural features, and neighborhood or geographic locations).
 - 2.1.2** The names bestowed on City streets, programs, facilities, and property shall be consistent with City values.
 - 2.1.2** When naming streets or facilities after an individual or group:
 - 2.1.2.1** The individual can be living or deceased.

- 2.1.2.2 Individuals or groups must have made significant historical, cultural or other important contributions to the City, state, or country.
- 2.1.2.3 Consideration will be made by the Naming Facilities Committee as to how the individual or group reflects the community's ethnic, cultural and gender diversity.
- 2.1.3 Names, which could be construed as advertising a particular business, shall be avoided. This does not apply to naming that falls under Wilmington's existing sponsorship policy.
- 2.1.4 Discriminatory or derogatory names from the point of view of race, sex, color, creed, political affiliation, or other legally protected classes or social factors, shall be avoided.

3.0 Process for Naming and Renaming Streets and Alleyways

3.1 Definitions and Notes

- 3.1.1 **Naming of Unnamed Streets**– Applies to any City-owned, controlled, or maintained streets or alleyways that do not already have a name.
- 3.1.2 **Honorific Naming** – Honorific street naming is intended to recognize and honor individuals or groups without changing the official name of the street or the official addresses of residences and businesses on the street. The signage for the honorary street name is posted above standard city street name signs and will generally only extend for a specific number of blocks rather than the full length of the street.
- 3.1.3 **Renaming** – Renaming is replacing or altering the existing official name of the street with a new one, requiring all addresses to be changed for residents and businesses and all signage to be replaced. To preserve the integrity of those streets and public places that have already been historically connected or dedicated, the renaming of public streets will be exceptionally rare.

3.2 Naming of streets in newly planned developments will follow the guidelines outlined in existing Wilmington policies (*City of Wilmington Code: Part II GENERAL ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 11 STREETS AND SIDEWALKS, Article I IN GENERAL and ARTICLE II STREETS GENERALLY; Part III TECHNICAL CODES, CHAPTER 18 SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS, ARTICLE III REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS; City of Wilmington Technical Standards and Specifications Manual.*)

3.3 Naming of Unnamed; Honorific Naming; Renaming Streets will follow this process:

3.3.1 Providing Application Materials

- 3.3.1.1 The City Manager or designee is responsible for the creation and distribution of application materials to the public/interested parties.

3.3.1.2 The City Manager or designee will be the point of entry for initial inquiries, helping applicants understand the process, as well as answering questions. The application requirements will be clearly explained in writing and available in a manner that is transparent to all members of the public.

3.3.2 Complete the Application and submit to the City Clerk – requirements of a complete application include:

3.3.2.1 Demonstration of Local Support: The applicant will distribute a formal petition to gain signatures of members of the public to demonstrate local support. The petition will be distributed in a form approved by the city, and signatures will be verified by the City Clerk.

3.3.2.1.1 If applying to rename a street or alleyway, the applicant must obtain signatures from no less than 75 percent of the property addresses on the street to which the street renaming applies.

3.3.2.1.2 If applying to honorifically name a street, the applicant must obtain signatures from no less than 51 percent of the property addresses on the street to which the street honorific naming applies.

3.3.2.1.3 In the absence of the property owner’s signature, a property occupant or tenant’s signature may be counted. In the event of a conflict between the owner and a tenant, the owner’s wishes shall control. Only one signature (vote) shall be counted per property address. Property frontage volume shall not be relevant to the applicable percentage requirement but shall be a factor in the ultimate consideration – see § 3.3.7.2.

3.3.2.2 Description of street to be named or renamed.

3.3.2.2.1 For Honorific Names, the applicant must include the Identification of the particular section or block(s) of an existing City street for which the honorary designation is sought.

3.3.2.2.2 For Official Names, the proposed change will apply to the entirety of the street. No partial or section renamings shall be allowed.

3.3.2.3 Proposed name, and a description of how the naming request meets the criteria contained within this policy. This includes, providing compelling evidence of the extraordinary contribution of the individual or group to the City, state, or nation. Compelling evidence can include:

- 3.3.2.3.1 Letters of recommendation from civic, business or service organizations.
- 3.3.2.3.2 Biographical information on the individual or group.
- 3.3.2.3.3 Historical vetting of their character and contributions.
- 3.3.2.4 The applicant must provide relevant background and biographical information as to why the individual or group the street is already named after should be changed.
 - 3.3.2.4.1 This should include why the individual or group does not meet the criteria outlined earlier in this policy.
- 3.3.2.5 Application fee: Along with any application submitted, the applicant shall include payment of a non-refundable fee (of \$200) to defray the costs associated with the review of the application.
 - 3.3.2.5.1 Note: Additional fees will be due later in the process depending upon the success of the request.
- 3.3.3 Initial Review of the application by the Naming Facilities Committee**
 - 3.3.3.1 Review**
 - 3.3.3.1.1 While applications can be submitted at any time, the Naming Facilities Committee will only review submissions once every 2 years, during even numbered years.
 - 3.3.3.1.2 The Committee will take into consideration how the applications meet the criteria outlined in section 2.0 of this policy.
 - 3.3.3.2 The Committee will determine which applicants move forward to the next stage and will provide a response to applicants (see section 5.0 for more details).
- 3.3.4 Verification of Application** - Following the Approval of the initial application, the City will verify the information and consult with necessary parties. This includes:
 - 3.3.4.1 Consultation with the City Addressing Coordinator to ensure no negative impact on emergency services delivery;
 - 3.3.4.2 Verification of the facts presented on the individual or group by City Staff;
 - 3.3.4.3 The City Clerk will verify the names on any petitions to demonstrate local support.
- 3.3.5 Naming Facilities Committee Consideration**
 - 3.3.5.1 Review**
 - 3.3.5.1.1 The Committee shall review the information that staff returns to them after completing the verification of the application.
 - 3.3.5.2 The Committee will determine which applicants move forward to the next stage and will provide a response to applicants (see section 5.0 for more details)

3.3.5.2.1 The applicants that move forward will be required to submit an additional fee (of \$500) to offset the costs of public outreach and administrative costs of the public input process.

3.3.6 Public Input – All residents, especially parties affected by the naming or renaming, time allowing, may have the opportunity to give a public comment on the naming or renaming resolution.

3.3.6.1 Public notice is given

3.3.6.1.1 This includes mailed postcards along the corresponding roadways for street naming and renaming.

3.3.6.2 Public Input will be collected through:

3.3.6.2.1 Community input meeting (an informational meeting with the opportunity to meet with staff and have questions answered)

3.3.6.2.2 Electronic survey for input (a handwritten version will also be available at the information meeting)

3.3.6.3 During this time, the Naming Facilities Committee will also share any proposals with the full Council to keep them informed.

3.3.7 Committee Recommendation

3.3.7.1 Input from the public will be presented by the Planning Staff to the Naming Facilities Committee.

3.3.7.2 The Committee shall consider all factors that it deems relevant, including but not limited to, the amount of support or non-support by representatives of the property addresses and property frontage by volume upon the street at issue.

3.3.7.3 Following the public input and any revision(s) that arise, the Committee will make a recommendation to the full Council about adopting any requests.

3.3.8 Final Vote and Adoption

3.3.8.1 Wilmington’s City Council shall determine the outcome of the naming resolution.

3.3.8.2 Costs for signage, if adopted by Council:

3.3.8.2.1 Honorific Naming - If applicant desires more signage beyond two standard City sign blades, applicant will provide 50% of the cost.

3.3.8.2.2 Renaming – In the rare instance where a street will be renamed, the costs for signage will be paid for by the City.

4.0 Process for Renaming City Facilities

4.1 Types of Facilities – Facilities include Parks, Buildings, Parking Decks, Bridges, Stadiums, Greenway Trails, Conference Rooms, or other City facilities.

4.2 Renaming Facilities will follow this process:

4.2.1 Providing Application Materials

4.2.1.1 The City Manager or designee is responsible for the creation and distribution of application process and materials to the public/interested parties.

4.2.1.2 The Planning Staff will be the point of entry for initial inquiries, helping applicants understand the process, as well as answering questions. The application requirements will be clearly explained in writing and available in a manner that is transparent to all members of the public.

4.2.2 Complete the Application and submit to the City Clerk – requirements of application include:

4.2.2.1 Demonstration of Local Support

4.2.2.1.1 Applicants are encouraged to collect signatures from community members impacted by the facility name change, provide letters of support from community organizations, or utilize online petitions to connect with community members across Wilmington.

4.2.2.1.2 Applicants should present to the relevant City Boards, Commissions, or Committees to get their support. The Planning Staff may direct applicants to the appropriate City groups for different renaming requests.

4.2.2.2 Description of City facility to be renamed.

4.2.2.3 Proposed name, and a description of how the newly proposed name meets the criteria outline in section 2.0 of this policy. This includes, providing compelling evidence of the extraordinary contribution of the individual or group to the City, State, or nation. Compelling evidence can include:

4.2.2.3.1 Letters of recommendation from civic, business or service organizations

4.2.2.3.2 Biographical information on the individual or group

4.2.2.3.3 Historical vetting of their character and contributions

4.2.2.4 Additionally, the applicant must provide relevant background and biographical information as to why the individual or group the street is currently named after should be changed. Including, why they do not meet the criteria outlined earlier in this policy.

4.2.2.5 Application fee: Along with any application submitted, the applicant shall include payment of a non-refundable fee (of \$200) to defray the costs associated with the review of the application.

4.2.2.5.1 Note: Additional fees will be due later in the process depending upon the success of the request.

4.2.3 Initial Review of the application by the Naming Facilities Committee

4.2.3.1 Review

4.2.3.1.1 While applications can be submitted at any time, the Naming Facilities Committee will only review

submissions once every 2 years, during even numbered years.

4.2.3.1.2 The Committee will take into consideration how the applications meet the criteria outlined in section 2.0 of this policy.

4.2.3.2 The Committee will determine which applicants move forward to the next stage and will provide a response to applicants (see section 5.0 for more details).

4.2.4 Verification of Application - Following the Approval of the initial application, the City will verify the information and consult with necessary parties. This includes:

4.2.4.1 Consultation with the City Addressing Coordinator to ensure no negative impact on emergency services delivery;

4.2.4.2 Verification of the facts presented on the individual or group;

4.2.4.3 Verification of local support

4.2.4.3.1 The City will conduct an official petition to collect signatures, the parameters of which were previously determined by the Naming Facilities Committee.

4.2.4.3.2 The City Clerk will verify the names on any petitions to demonstrate local support.

4.2.5 Naming Facilities Committee Consideration

4.2.5.1 Review

4.2.5.1.1 The Committee reviews the information that staff returns to them after completing the verification of the application.

4.2.5.2 The Committee will determine which applicants move forward to the next stage and will provide a response to applicants (see section 5.0 for more details)

4.2.5.2.1 The applicants that move forward will be required to submit an additional fee (of \$500) to offset the costs of public outreach and administrative costs of the public input process.

4.2.6 Public Input – All residents, especially parties affected by the naming or renaming, shall have the opportunity to give a public comment on the naming or renaming resolution.

4.2.6.1 Public notice is given

4.2.6.1.1 This includes mailed postcards to adjacent neighborhoods, or the appropriate audience deemed necessary for the proportional impact of the naming.

4.2.6.2 Public input will be collected through:

4.2.6.2.1 Community input meeting (an informational meeting with the opportunity to meet with staff and have questions answered)

4.2.6.2.2 Electronic survey for input (and handwritten version will also be available at the information meeting)

4.2.6.3 During this time, the Naming Facilities Committee will also share any proposals with the full Council to keep them informed.

4.2.7 Committee Recommendation

4.2.7.1 Input from the public will be presented by the Planning Staff to the Naming Facilities Committee.

4.2.7.2 Following the public input and any revision(s) that arise, the Committee will make a recommendation to the full Council about adopting any requests.

4.2.8 Final Vote and Adoption

4.2.8.1 Wilmington's City Council votes on the naming resolution.

4.2.8.2 In the rare instance of the renaming of a City facility, costs for signage will be paid for by the City.

5.0 Feedback for Applicants

5.1 If an application is determined to be unable to move forward during the initial stages of the process:

5.1.1 The Naming Facilities Committee will communicate with applicants to update them on their progress and why they are not moving forward.

5.1.2 When possible, the Committee will provide advice to the applicant(s) on how to adjust their application to allow it to move forward. These amendments to the original application would not be subject to the bi-annual review window.

5.2 If the application does meet the policy requirements, it will proceed to the next stage and participants would not be notified at this time.