



TITLE: Street Naming and Address Numbering	POLICY NUMBER: TBD
EFFECTIVE DATE: November 2, 2026	PAGES: 8
ENABLING ACTIONS: Resolution 2026-XX	REVISED DATES: N/A
APPROVED:	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a uniform process and standards for naming streets and assigning addresses within the Town of Los Gatos. This Policy is intended to:

1. Promote public safety and efficient emergency response;
2. Minimize navigational errors for residents, visitors, businesses, and service providers;
3. Preserve the history, ecology, and character of Los Gatos; and
4. Provide a consistent process for naming new public and private streets and assigning addresses.

SCOPE

This Policy applies within Town limits to new public and private streets, street renaming, and the assignment, confirmation, or change of building, unit, suite, and other official addresses. It includes accessory dwelling units (ADUs), junior accessory dwelling units (JADUs), and private access roads requiring identification for emergency response. Naming a private road or assigning an address does not establish public ownership, maintenance responsibility, legal access, or approval of a land use.

POLICY

Authority

The Town Engineer shall be responsible for administering the Town's street naming standards and for coordinating street name assignments associated with subdivisions, planned developments, new streets, and other development applications under applicable Town approvals.

The Building Official shall assign or confirm official building addresses through the Town's address request process and shall coordinate with the Town Engineer when engineering, subdivision, access, GIS, or street naming issues affect the address assignment.

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The Town Council retains authority to adopt and amend the Town's Approved Street Name List and to approve alternative street names and all street renaming by resolution, consistent with Government Code Section 34091.1 and applicable Town law.

The Town Engineer and Building Official shall coordinate new street names, street renaming, and address changes affecting emergency access with the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department, Santa Clara County Fire Department (SCCFD), and the responsible emergency dispatch agency. They shall obtain County Communications clearance for proposed street names and coordinate with USPS. Community Development, the County Assessor, and utility providers shall be consulted as applicable.

This Policy supplements the Town Code and applicable building, fire, and State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations. Those requirements control in the event of a conflict.

The Town Engineer, in coordination with the Building Official and SCCFD, shall determine when a private access road requires an official street name under applicable requirements.

Street Naming Standards

The Town Council approved street name lists by resolutions adopted on October 4, 1982, and August 19, 2025. Parks and Public Works (PPW) shall maintain the list of remaining approved street names in coordination with the Town Clerk. Developers shall utilize the list of remaining approved street names as the primary source for naming new streets.

Developers may propose other names not previously approved by Council. However, any proposed names not previously approved by Council must be approved by Council by resolution before approval of a map bearing the name or assignment of an official address using the name.

All proposed street names, including names selected from the approved list, shall:

1. Be unique within the Town and surrounding service area, except for a continuation of an existing street;
2. Be easily pronounced and understood when spoken;
3. Be acceptable to USPS and emergency dispatch personnel;
4. Be limited to twenty (20) characters where practical, counting spaces in the base name but excluding the street type designation; and
5. Exclude punctuation, symbols, and special characters. If a name on the Council approved list conflicts with this standard or cannot receive agency clearance, the Town Engineer shall refer the issue to Council or require selection of another approved name; staff shall not alter the adopted spelling.

Street names shall not:

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1. Match any existing street name in Town or closely resemble existing street names in spelling or pronunciation, except for a continuation of an existing street. A different suffix alone shall not make a confusing name acceptable;
2. Be offensive, discriminatory, or vulgar;
3. Promote a business, product, or commercial enterprise;
4. Consist solely of numbers or a single letter; or
5. Include honorifics such as Mr., Mrs., Dr., Judge, Mayor, or similar titles.

An extension of an existing street shall retain its name, and a continuous street shall ordinarily have one name. Disconnected segments shall not share a name when doing so would misdirect emergency responders. Any exception requires documented emergency dispatch and SCCFD review.

The following street type designations may be proposed where appropriate: Street, Avenue, Road, Drive, Court, Circle, Lane, Place, Way, Terrace, and Trail. Standard abbreviations shall follow USPS Publication 28. The Town Engineer may approve alternative suffixes when warranted and compatible with emergency dispatch and USPS requirements.

Street Renaming

Street renaming shall be discouraged and considered only when required for public safety, necessary to eliminate duplicate or confusing names, or needed to improve emergency response operations.

A request may be initiated by affected property owners or Town staff. Town initiation does not replace the requirement for a stated justification. The Town Council shall approve any street renaming by resolution.

For a request initiated by property owners, the initiating party shall submit a petition signed by all affected property owners. Affected properties are those whose official address would change or whose legal access uses the street segment proposed for renaming. The petition shall identify each property and owner, the proposed name, and the reason for the request. The Town Engineer will establish application requirements for verifying ownership and petition completeness. Unanimous owner consent is not required for a Town initiated change that meets the criteria above.

The application shall include a map of the affected street, parcels, and access points. Staff shall mail notice to affected property owners and to occupants of affected properties at least 30 calendar days before Council consideration and provide an opportunity for comment. Council may shorten this policy notice period for a documented urgent public safety need, subject to applicable law.

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The initiating party shall pay the Town's actual processing, notice, and street sign costs for a privately initiated request, with an initial deposit in the amount established by the Town's adopted fee schedule or separate Council action. The Town shall provide a cost estimate, account for charges, collect any balance due, and refund unused funds. For a Town initiated change, the Council action shall identify funding and any authorized cost allocation.

Staff shall present a report to Council evaluating the justification, agency comments, owner and occupant input, historical significance, costs, and transition arrangements, with a recommendation for approval or denial.

Numbering of Buildings

The Building Official shall assign all official addresses in conformance with Town Code Chapter 23, Article VI, including the numbering method in Section 23.60.015.

The established Los Gatos numbering origins, odd and even sides, block allocations, and frontage intervals shall be applied as provided in the Town Code. This Policy does not establish a new numbering origin or authorize a conflicting numbering method.

Address numbers must be assigned using intervals sufficient to accommodate future development.

Corner lots shall generally receive an address from the street providing primary vehicular access. The Building Official shall determine the official address when multiple options exist, considering the principal entrance and the route emergency responders should use.

Flag lots shall receive an available address number in the proper sequence from the street providing legal access. For shared driveways or complex access, the Building Official shall coordinate address and directional identification with SCCFD.

New fractional addresses shall not be permitted. Letters may be added to building addresses to distinguish individual buildings on a single parcel when approved by the Building Official and compatible with emergency response and postal identification.

Multiple Units and Buildings

Residential, condominium, hotel, and commercial developments containing multiple dwelling units, tenant spaces, or occupiable areas shall use a consistent and logical unit or suite numbering system that facilitates identification by occupants, emergency responders, postal and delivery services, and Town staff.

1. Apartment and condominium buildings shall receive a primary street address. Individual units shall receive sequential unit numbers. Commercial buildings containing multiple tenant spaces shall use approved suite identifiers.

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2. Each ADU shall receive a distinct official address or unit identifier. The Building Official shall determine the appropriate identifier for a JADU and other additional dwelling units, in coordination with SCCFD as needed.
3. Where a development contains multiple buildings, each building shall have a unique building identifier or address. The complete combination of street address, building identifier, and unit or suite identifier shall be unique and unambiguous.
4. Unit numbers shall follow a consistent sequence on each floor. Where practical, the unit or suite number should identify the floor; for example, 101 through 199 on the first floor and 201 through 299 on the second. Basement levels shall be clearly distinguished from floors above grade.
5. For high rise buildings, as defined by the applicable building and fire codes, and other buildings with complex circulation, the proposed numbering system shall be coordinated with SCCFD during fire and life safety plan review. Building, floor, stairway, elevator, directory, and unit identification shall allow responders to locate the destination readily.
6. Buildings with multiple units shall provide an approved directory identifying unit numbers and their locations when required by the fire code official. The directory shall be located at the primary entrance, lobby, or other approved location. Unit identifiers shall be plainly visible and legible at or immediately adjacent to each unit entrance.
7. Unit, suite, floor, building, and address identifiers shown on approved architectural and fire and life safety plans shall be consistent with the Town's official addressing records. Unit or suite numbering shall not be changed after approval without Building Official approval and coordination with SCCFD where required.

Address Identification and Street Signs

New and existing building numbering shall comply with applicable Town Code and adopted Fire Code requirements. Address identification shall be legible, contrast with its background, and be visible from the street or road fronting the property. Character size, stroke width, materials, and additional locations shall comply with those requirements and the fire code official's approved requirements.

Where access is by a private road and the building cannot be viewed from the public way, an approved sign or other identification shall be provided at the access point. Required identification shall be posted during construction and before occupancy at the times required by applicable codes and approvals and maintained thereafter.

Street name signs shall conform to Town standards and applicable fire access requirements. The developer shall install required signs as part of the approved improvements. Responsibility for ongoing maintenance of private street signs shall be identified in the project approval. Property owners shall maintain required building and unit identification.

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Numbering Changes

Address number changes shall be avoided. Existing addresses shall not be changed solely to conform to this Policy. Changes may occur when necessary to improve public safety, eliminate numbering conflicts, accommodate redevelopment, or improve emergency response.

The Building Official's written decision shall identify the affected addresses, reasons, effective date, required posting, and any applicable Town Code review or appeal procedure. An owner or applicant may request reconsideration in writing before the effective date; this does not extend an applicable appeal deadline.

Street Name and Address Approval Process

For new roads, the developer shall propose street names on the tentative map that proposes the road and additionally shall submit a separate listing of all such names with the tentative map. Before the tentative map hearing or approval, whichever occurs first, the Town Engineer shall confirm name availability and required agency clearance.

The Town Engineer shall document reservation of an approved name for the life of the approved tentative map, including lawful extensions. If the map expires or is withdrawn before recordation, the name shall be released for reuse after confirming that no official address or recorded street uses it.

For a proposed name outside the approved list, the developer shall work with the Town Engineer to obtain Council approval by resolution before the tentative map hearing or approval, whichever occurs first. A tentative application may use a clearly identified temporary street label during application review before that point. Where no subdivision map is required, the same naming review shall occur before official address assignment.

The Building Official shall assign final street addresses through the Town's address request process. For subdivisions, final address assignment shall follow map recordation. The application shall identify the parcel, approved street name, building and unit locations, and access routes; utility or service addresses shall be identified when needed. Preliminary numbers shall not be represented as official addresses.

Approved Street Name List Maintenance

The Town Council may amend the Approved Street Name List by resolution. As the adopted street name list is depleted, Parks and Public Works shall work with the appropriate Town department to develop proposed new names for Council adoption. The Town Clerk shall maintain the official record of adopted names and names used on recorded maps; PPW shall track available and reserved names.

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Unless otherwise approved by Council, new street names proposed to be added to the list must reflect native flora, fauna, geography, or history associated with Los Gatos. All proposed names remain subject to the safety and clarity standards in this Policy.

Library staff shall verify the historical or cultural basis of proposed names and seek input from knowledgeable community representatives when appropriate.

Mapping, Notice, and Implementation

Staff shall incorporate approved street names and addresses into Town GIS databases and the Los Gatos Street List managed by PPW. The responsible official shall send new assignments and changes to emergency dispatch agencies, SCCFD, Police, USPS, the County Assessor, and affected utilities, and request updates from public mapping providers.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 34092, the Town Clerk shall promptly forward the resolution, order, or other instrument establishing or changing a street name, or changing house numbers, to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

For street renaming or renumbering of occupied property, the approval shall establish a coordinated effective date, ordinarily at least 60 calendar days after approval. Staff shall notify affected owners and occupants of the new address, effective date, required sign changes, and their responsibility to update personal and business records. The responsible official shall confirm dispatch readiness and coordinate signs and agency records for that date. A shorter period requires a documented urgent public safety need and compliance with applicable law. The Town shall retain former and current identifiers and effective dates in its records. External database updates and postal transition arrangements shall be coordinated with the responsible providers; approval does not guarantee their completion on a particular date.

Exceptions

The Town Engineer, for street naming administration, or the Building Official, for address assignments, may approve minor deviations from this Policy when necessary to maintain consistency with existing neighborhood patterns, address unique site conditions, improve public safety, or facilitate emergency response.

Any approved exception shall be documented in writing with the reason and any required emergency service concurrence. An exception shall not waive applicable law, Town Code requirements, public safety and nonduplication requirements, Council reserved decisions, or required notice and review procedures.

APPLICABILITY

This Policy applies to applications submitted and Town-initiated actions that were initiated on or after its effective date, subject to applicable law. Previously approved street names and addresses remain in effect unless changed through an authorized process.

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APPROVED AS TO FORM

Gabrielle Wheelen, Town Attorney