

PARK AREA NAMING POLICY

Purpose

This policy establishes the criteria for the naming of City of Mercer Island owned park and recreation facilities, parks, park features, trails, open space areas, and select right-of-way spaces (collectively, "Park Areas.")

Definitions

Park and Recreation Facilities: buildings that are maintained by the Parks or Recreation division of the City.

Park Features: sub-areas of parks that may be suitable for naming, including batting cages, courts, dog parks, galleries, gardens, pavilions, playfields, playgrounds, pools, p-patches, shelters, skate parks, stages, theaters, walking paths, etc.

Parks: Park means, without limitation, any public area created, established, designated, maintained, provided, or set aside by the City for the purposes of public rest, play, recreation, enjoyment, or assembly, and all buildings, facilities, and structures located thereon or therein, as well as all associated areas, including but not limited to parking lots.

Open space areas: areas purposefully left predominantly in a vegetated space to create urban separators and greenbelts and to: 1) sustain native ecosystems, connect and increase protective buffers for environmentally critical areas; or 2) provide a visual contrast to continuous development, reinforce community identity and aesthetics; or 3) provide links between important environmental or recreational resources.

Right-of-way spaces: public land areas zoned for right-of-way use. This policy applies to right-of-way spaces that have been designated for public recreation use and as such may benefit from a common name that can be used by City staff and residents.

Trail: a marked or established path or route meant primarily for recreational and/or educational use.

Policy

1.0 General Policy

The selection and approval of the name for a City owned Park Area shall be the function of the City Council.

2.0 Naming Criteria

The name for a Park Area should meet at least one of the following criteria:

- a. Geographical identification (neighborhood, boundary road, etc.)
- b. Natural/geologic features
- c. Historic or cultural significance
- d. Individual, living or deceased (donor who stipulates name as condition of donation)
- e. Individual, living or deceased (outstanding public service or community contribution)

- f. Individual, deceased at least three (3) years, who made a significant contribution/lasting impact to the City's parks
- g. Descriptive name (building/property purpose)
- h. City identity and image
- i. Names that lend dignity to the property
- j. Names that represent enduring values or merit (rather than passing popularity or notoriety)

3.0 Disqualifying Criteria

Any names that fall under the following criteria will not be considered:

- a. Names too similar to existing names of current Park Areas
- b. Names of public officials who currently hold office or staff currently employed by the City
- c. A name that by contemporary community standards is derogatory, offensive, distasteful, or in violation of generally accepted moral standards
- d. Names of other public entities, including names of cities, towns, and governmental agencies, unless the entity contributes significantly to the establishment or maintenance of the park or facility

4.0 Duration of Name

The naming of Park Areas shall be approached with the intention that names are permanent unless they fall under a time-limited sponsorship agreement or for other reasons as determined by the City Council.

- a. Temporary Name
The City Manager may assign a temporary name to a Park Area until the time at which a permanent name is selected.
- b. Permanent Name
 - a. The City Council may independently select a name for a Park Area consistent with the criteria above.
 - b. The City Council may also choose to commence a community engagement process to solicit suggestions for a Park Area name. The City Council will direct the City Manager to conduct the process and identify parameters they wish to include in the process. The City Council may also designate a board or commission to serve in an advisory capacity for the solicitation and recommendation of a Park Area name.

5.0 Renaming

The renaming of Park Areas should be avoided unless the current name has been determined by the City Council to misrepresent the values or character of the City of Mercer Island. The process for renaming a Park Area will adhere to the same criteria established herein and will occur at the direction of the City Council.