



POLICY FOR NAMING COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES

I. POLICY STATEMENT

It shall be the policy of the Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation Commission to review and initially approve names for county parks and recreation facilities using the following criteria:

II. CRITERIA

- A. The name of a park or recreation facility should, if possible, have geographic, botanic, zoologic, agricultural, or historic significance. The significance of the name should be generally recognized and known throughout the County, and if possible, recognized and known in the area or neighborhood in which it is located.
- B. A park or recreation facility should not be named after an individual unless one of the following exceptions applies:
 1. The park was acquired by means of a substantial gift or donation by an individual, family, organization, or corporation. Such gifts or donations may carry a stipulation, if acceptable to the Board of Supervisors and the Parks Commission, that a certain name is used to identify the park.
 2. An individual who has made a substantial contribution in terms of volunteer services, providing a broad recreational or environmental benefit to the residents of Stanislaus County. In most instances, the person should be honored posthumously.
 3. It is determined an individual or family has made a significant historical impact to the area or region.
- C. A park or recreation facility should not be named after a person whose contribution to the park system was or is a part of that individual's normal duties as an employee of an agency under the jurisdiction of the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors. An exception may be made for former employees who have contributed volunteer services of an exceptional nature beyond their normal duties.

- D. Parks should not be named after the predominant ethnic group of its surrounding neighborhood, since the ethnic composition of residential areas frequently changes.
- E. However, names with historic significance for the area which happen to be ethnic names are certainly permitted.
- F. A park or facility name should be of reasonable length and easy to pronounce and spell, so it will be readily used and easily displayed. Names that are controversial should be avoided.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. The Parks and Recreation Department will encourage input from historical societies, community groups, or other groups having special knowledge when considering a name to highlight an area's geographic or historic significance.
- B. Temporary designation of names will not be permitted. Temporary designations oftentimes emerge as permanent names by default. The selection of a park name should occur during the acquisition or development processes, or at an appropriate time for the situation.
- C. Naming areas of a park shall be permitted to honor a person or organization that has worked for and distinguished themselves in their dedication to the parks system, or in the efforts towards acquisition or development of a park site. Good evidence should be presented to substantiate such a request.
- D. Community input and park naming contests are highly encouraged to stimulate public interest and obtain name suggestions. Only suggestions which meet policy guidelines will be considered.
- E. To avoid duplication and confusion, all proposed names for parks or recreation facilities should be checked against other park and facilities names found in the County.
- F. Names submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department shall be given to the Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation Commission for selection and initial approval. The selection will then be forwarded to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors for final approval and adoption.
- G. Groundbreaking and ribbon-cutting ceremonies shall be held by the Parks Commission and the Board of Supervisors. These should take place when the land for a park is donated, when construction commences, or when a new park or facility is ready for public use.

IV. NAME CHANGES

Once given, a name is usually as enduring as the property itself. Therefore, a park or facility name should be selected with the intention that it will be permanent. Change for the sake of change shall not be permitted. Name changes shall only be approved if

there is a serious and substantial reason for requiring a change in a name. It is the responsibility of those who select the names of parks and recreation facilities to do so with the awareness that this name will be on maps and in the community for many generations to come.

V. SPONSORSHIPS

Non-profit groups, civic groups, and community organizations may ask to sponsor a park. For example, they may donate the land or agree to take care of ongoing maintenance of the park. In return, the Parks Commission may agree to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the Board adopt the name of the property of facility after that group. A written agreement should be reached as to how and in what form the group will fulfill the sponsorship agreement. A long-term agreement should be agreed upon whenever possible.

VI. DONOR RECOGNITION

Plaques and markers will be considered for the purpose of recognizing individuals or groups who have given substantial donations to the parks and recreation system.

- A. All proposals for gifts of funds or park improvements shall be reviewed by the Parks Commission to determine if the improvement is needed and is in keeping with the plan of the park.
- B. If the gift is less than \$500, a Certificate of Appreciation shall be issued by the Parks Commission.
- C. If the gift is over \$500, the name of the donor and the name of the person the gift honors shall be placed on a plaque board at the individual park where the funds were used. The plaque board shall be placed in a prominent place accessible to the public.
- D. If the gift is a major facility such as a building, or playground equipment, or other improvement which is in keeping with the plan of the park, individual plaques shall be affixed to the improvement in such a way that they will be visible to the public. The Board of Supervisors will also receive and acknowledge all major gifts of this type.

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