



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

POLICY NAME: Naming of Parks, Recreational Facilities, Regional trails and Natural Areas

Policy Category: Information/Communication

Date Reviewed:	Date Adopted:
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Introduction

"The name we give to something shapes our attitude toward it." Katherine Paterson, novelist

The act of naming is significant and meaningful. A name can invoke powerful emotions, create images and help to recall history. The naming of a park, regional trail, facility or natural area is intended to be a permanent act, and therefore should be approached in a thoughtful manner. The name of a park, regional trail, natural area or facility should take into consideration the past, present and future history of the land, its use and our relationship to it.

This policy provides Portland Parks & Recreation a systematic and consistent approach to naming our assets. This policy addresses unnamed parks, recreational facilities, regional trails and natural areas.

Policy Statement

Portland Parks & Recreation strives to identify names for parks, recreational facilities, regional trails and natural areas that best reflect the significance of a feature and the community it serves, while also ensuring a worthy and enduring legacy for the City of Portland’s parks and recreation system.

An ad hoc committee appointed by the Director will review naming suggestions for Portland Parks & Recreation assets. The committee will consider names based on identified criteria and in consideration of public comment. The name of parks, recreational facilities, regional trails and natural areas must be appropriate to its location and be a name that remains relevant as the community grows and changes.

Definitions

Naming: the permanent attribution assigned to a park, recreational facility, regional trail or natural area

Park: open space owned or managed by The City of Portland for recreational and/or natural resource values. This includes all traditionally designed parks, gardens, and specialized parks under the stewardship of Portland Parks & Recreation.

Recreational facilities: major structures such as community centers, swimming pools, stadiums, and fountains located within lands under the stewardship of Portland Parks & Recreation.

Facility: any building or structure that is located on property owned or managed by Portland Parks & Recreation.

Natural Areas: Land with limited development (generally trails), primarily acquired and managed for its natural resource and environmental value.

Regional Trails: Regional trails connect Portland to adjacent communities or to regionally significant natural features such as rivers and streams. Typically, paths in parks or contained within a natural area are considered local access trails, not regional trails. The definition is based on length and purpose, rather than on width or material.

Major Donations: a donation of property, goods or cash generally with no expectation of return. If the gift is contingent upon a special request, it is made subject to a “condition.”

Sponsorships: Financial or in-kind support from an individual or corporation for a specific service, program, facility, park, or event in return for certain benefits.

Guiding Principles

Portland Parks & Recreation actively names parks, recreational facilities, regional trails and natural areas.

- Amenities within these larger structures may be named in accordance with the Sponsorship Policy.
- Memorials most often take the shape of plaques placed on or in proximity to features (eg. Benches, drinking fountains) and are regulated by the Memorial Policy.

In recognition of the unique history of the native community and the recent Portland City Council affirmation of Portland’s policy to honor and respect tribal communities, the native community will be engaged in naming assets.

Historic Events, People, and Places

History plays an important role in the naming of a park, recreational facility, regional trail and natural area. Historical context can inform a name by honoring the city, its founders, Native American heritage, local landmarks, prominent geographical locations, and natural and geological features.

Outstanding Individuals

The City has benefited, through its evolution, from the contributions made by many outstanding individuals. Honoring these individuals through naming can remind the public of our past, inspire great actions and motivate us to become better stewards. Individuals honored through naming should have contributed significantly to the betterment of the environment, humanity and/or the City of Portland.

Major Gifts

The City of Portland and Portland Parks & Recreation sometimes benefit from the significant generosity of residents, businesses, and foundations. On occasion, the significance of such donations may warrant the acknowledgement of such a gift by naming.

Procedures & Guidelines

Naming for Historic Events, People, and Places

When a park and/or recreational facility is associated with or located near events, people, and places of historic, cultural or social significance, consideration will be given to naming that park, recreational facility, regional trail and natural area after such events, people, and places. In considering such proposals, the relationship of the event, person or place to the park and/or recreational facility must be demonstrated through research and documentation.

Naming for Outstanding Individuals

Naming a park and/or recreational facility for an outstanding individual is encouraged posthumously (at least 3 years since date of passing) and where that person's significance and good reputation have been accepted in the City's, State's and/or Nation's history.

When considering the naming of a park, recreational facility, regional trail and natural area after a person, consideration will be given when:

- The person was exceptionally dedicated or demonstrated excellence in service in ways that made a significant contribution to the land, community, Portland Parks & Recreation, the City of Portland, State of Oregon, or the United States.
- The person volunteered and gave extraordinary help or care to individuals, families, or groups, or support to the community.
- The person risked his or her life to save or protect others.

Naming for Major Donations

A significant donation made to the City that adds considerable value to the City of Portland parks and recreation system may be recognized through naming.

The threshold for considering the naming of a park, natural area, regional trail and/or recreational facility will include one or more of the following:

- Land for the majority of the site was deeded to the city.
- Contribution of a significant portion of the capital construction costs associated with developing the park/recreational facility.
- Creation of or contribution to an endowment for the continued maintenance and/or programming of the park/recreational facility. The contribution will provide resources to support the effort for a minimum of 20 years.

Donors seeking naming rights for major donations with respect to an individual will be asked to follow the principles that apply to naming a park for an outstanding person. Exceptions to this will be considered on their own merits.

Naming Conventions

Portland Parks & Recreation operates a large and diverse park system; the naming text helps the user understand the type of development and use. The following terms are applied as part of the naming process:

“Park” applies to all parks that have been or will be developed primarily for recreational purposes. Such parks usually involve a high degree of landscape and recreational facility development.

“Natural Area” applies to all parks where the primary purpose is the conservation of the natural environment. Such parks generally will have little or no development.

Other Considerations

- Portland Parks & Recreation reserves the right to determine which amenities fall under this policy - parks, recreational facilities, regional trails and natural areas; names should be consistent with our data management systems
- Trail segments will be labeled by staff with approval of the City Nature Manager, in a manner that supports the ability of users to navigate safely through the trail system
- Names that are currently in use will not be considered
- Names that are discriminatory or derogatory will not be considered
- We discourage the renaming of an existing asset
- All graphical representations within our parks system are subject to our design standards
- Portland Parks & Recreation reserves the right to rename a park, facility, regional trail or natural area if the name is later determined to be inappropriate, incorrect or offensive
- Naming parks and/or recreational facilities with a company name is not permitted by way of City

Code; corporate logos, insignias, brands or direct advertising text shall not be used in park and/or recreational facility naming text

Naming Process

Any person, group, or organization may submit an application to name a park, facility, regional trail or natural area.

Requests should contain the following minimum information:

- Name of applicant
- Proposed name for asset
- Background/support for proposed name
- Demonstrated community support for the proposed name
- Identify interested/impacted stakeholders (who will care about the name?)
- Description/map showing location
- If proposing to name a facility within a park, include a description/map showing the location of the facility
- If proposing to name a park or facility after an outstanding person, include documentation of that person's contribution to the City's, State's or Nation's history

Assessing and approving naming requests

Upon receipt of a naming request by Portland Parks & Recreation, the relevant neighborhood association(s) and community-based organizations will be advised and their comments on the proposal will be invited.

Proposals will be considered by a committee representing (but not limited to):

- The Director of Portland Parks and Recreation
- The Parks Commissioner
- The Oregon Historical Society
- The Portland Parks Board
- The Native Community Advisory Committee
- The local community, neighborhood association, or coalition

The Deputy Director will assign a staff person to assemble and support the committee. This staff person will take notes and convene meetings. The Director of Portland Parks & Recreation will approve committee membership.

The committee will:

- Review proposals for adherence to the policies of Portland Parks & Recreation
- Ensure that supporting information has been authenticated, particularly when an individual's name is proposed
- Take into consideration the comments of stakeholders, elected officials and community members

Once the committee has identified a name, the recommendation will be presented to the Director of Parks & Recreation in writing by the supporting staff person. A recommendation from the committee must have either the full consensus of the committee or have a 2/3 majority vote in support of the name. The Parks Director may solicit feedback from the Parks Board and/or the public to gain additional information prior to making a decision.

Research

It is essential that any name, especially names referencing individuals and/or families be thoroughly researched. Some suggestions for learning more about the history of a name include:

- Historic Plat Maps and Sanborn Maps
- Oregonian Archives: Available through Multnomah County Library
- Google Search for online documents or references
- Library Search for documents or references (ask a research librarian for assistance)
- Oregon Historical Society: <http://www.ohs.org/research/> has some online information, some hard

copy information.

- US Census Archives
- National Archives: <http://www.archives.gov/index.html>
- PP&R Park History (online, hard copy)
- Area tribes and native community groups
- SHPO - State Historic Preservation Office
- Oregon Geographic Names Board - their purpose is to supervise the naming of geographic features within the state of Oregon and to make recommendations to the USBGN, which has final approval authority. The Board also serves in an advisory capacity to federal, State, and local government by reviewing administrative name proposals

Communicating naming decisions

The Deputy Director will be responsible for communicating the decision of the Director of Parks & Recreation.

Appeals

Any person whose proposal to name/rename a park and/or recreational facility is denied by the Director of Portland Parks & Recreation may appeal to City Council by petition through the City Auditor.

Related Policies, Procedures & Forms

Timeline

The naming process should be complete prior to the opening of a new park or facility.

Step One – Public notification of naming opportunity made by PP&R Public Involvement staff to neighborhood association, stakeholders, participants in design process. There should be a minimum deadline of 30 days after notification to submit application.

Deputy Director will assign a PP&R staff person to the naming process.

Step Two – Applications to name a park are completed and submitted to the Deputy Director of Portland Parks & Recreation.

Acknowledgement of receipt of applications is conveyed either electronically or by phone within one week of receipt of application.

Step Three – Staff will review submitted proposals for completeness and adherence to the guidelines.

Step Four - The committee will be recruited by the staff person and approved by the Director

Step Five - The committee to review naming proposals will be convened within three months application deadline (prior to dedication of the facility)

Step Six – The committee reviews proposals, conducts additional research and develops a written recommendation for the Director. Notes from Committee discussions will include reasons for and against submitted names. The amount of time required to complete this work will depend on the number of proposals, amount of research and complexity of the process.

Step Seven – Director reviews recommendations and;

- A. Accepts the committee recommendation, then
 - i. All proposers are notified of the outcome of the process
- B. Declines the committee recommendation, then
 - ii. The committee continues review of other submissions or;
 - iii. New solicitation of names

The Director will respond to the committee recommendation within two weeks of receiving the

recommendation. The public (including all who submitted names) will be notified of the final decision via email and the information will be posted online.

Interim Names

Portland Parks & Recreation regularly acquires land. Portland Parks & Recreation will assign the parcel a name on a temporary basis based on our data management systems.

In general:

- Parcels acquired contiguous to another that are intended to expand the site will be named for the original site
- New, free standing parcels acquired with the intention of future development as a park will be named based on the street infrastructure (eg. 52nd & Alberta property)
- Natural Area acquisitions will be named for prominent or significant geographic features

Renaming

The renaming of parks, facilities, regional trails and natural areas will be encouraged for exceptional cases. Name changes will be subject to a critical examination that includes the original justification for the name and honors the value of prior contributors.

Appendix

Additional Comments

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