

**WESTMINSTER**

## Administrative Memorandum

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**Date:** TBD

**No:** 2025-XX (Supersedes 2021-03)

**Subject:** City of Westminster Site Naming and Renaming Policy

**Purpose:**

This policy establishes a standardize process for naming or renaming City of Westminster properties, including both owned and leased sites. It excludes public thoroughfares, bridges, and rights-of-way (ROWs). The goal is to ensure fairness and consistency throughout the naming or renaming process. The ultimate authority for the naming or renaming of City of Westminster properties is vested in the City Council. This policy provides the steps necessary to bring the proposed name to City Council for consideration and approval.

**City of Westminster Property Definitions:**

The following Terms of Reference are provided for clarity.

**Public Facilities** - Include, but are not limited to, all City-owned or leased buildings such as recreation and multi-use centers, special-use facilities, cultural and historical sites, aquatic facilities, libraries, administrative facilities, maintenance buildings, and any future City facilities.

**Open Spaces** - Land preserved and protected in a natural or undeveloped state for environmental, recreational, or aesthetic purposes

**Parkland** - Includes all designated park areas, including but not limited to regional parks, community parks, neighborhood parks, and special-use parks.

**Park Features** - Includes all significant structures and recreational elements within a park, such as sports fields, ball diamonds, skate parks, and other amenities.

**Context and Guiding Philosophy:**

The policy of the City is to reserve the naming or renaming of City of Westminster properties, including both owned and leased sites. This policy establishes consistent



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guidelines for citizens, community groups, city staff, City Council, and companies seeking approval for naming proposals.

The City will consider naming requests within the following categories:

1. **Historic Events, Places, and Persons:** A universally celebrated historical event, group, organization, or individual can play an important role in the naming or renaming of the City buildings, parks, open spaces, recreation centers, and libraries.

Historically, many parks in Westminster are named after locations in England. The City acknowledges this English naming tradition and considers it when evaluating proposals for renaming parks.

2. **Natural features:** Recognizable areas, neighborhoods, landmarks, or names of horticultural or historical significance for City of Westminster.
3. **Exceptional Individuals/organization:** A City of Westminster property shall be named after an individual or organization that has made a significant positive contribution to the community without which the site may not exist.
4. **Major Gifts:** Private dollars fundraised in public/private partnerships for the purposes of constructing or rehabilitating a City of Westminster property (or portions thereof) may be donated contingent on naming rights to the property. In such cases, and when the City has accepted said private dollars under those terms, the City Council shall honor the naming rights granted, provided that the name meets the criteria set forth by this administrative memo.
5. **Sponsorships:** The City of Westminster may solicit corporate sponsorships for City of Westminster properties (or portions thereof) that may be donated contingent on naming rights to the property for a defined period. In the case of temporary or time-limited naming rights, approval will be required.

**Naming/Renaming:** The following questions and procedures should be considered both individually and collectively when naming or renaming City of Westminster properties.

- a. Does the name carry historical, cultural, geographical, and social significance that will resonate for generations to come?
- b. Does the name evoke a strong and positive image?
- c. Does the name serve to memorialize or commemorate people, places, or events of enduring importance to the community or nation?
- d. Will the name foster significant bonds of friendship, mutual recognition, and support within the community or with those beyond it?
- e. Is the name associated with a notable achievement or the promotion of public welfare within the community or nation?



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- f. Is the name well-suited for the City of Westminster property considering its location, history, and the surrounding neighborhood?
- g. Does the name possess symbolic value that goes beyond its literal meaning, enhancing the character and identity of the City of Westminster property?
- h. Does the request to name the City of Westminster property in conjunction with a corporate gift risk undue commercialization?

### **Authorization:**

City Council has final authority to approve the naming or renaming of City of Westminster properties. If City Council requests assistance to name or rename a site, this policy will be used by City of Westminster. The process will be internally vetted and community participation will be solicited as deemed appropriate.

### **Procedures:**

#### **I. Submission Process for Naming and Renaming a City of Westminster Site**

- 1. Proposed names must be submitted in writing to the City Manager's Office (CMO). Proposals must contain, at the minimum, the following information:
  - a. Proposed Name
  - b. Proposed Site Location
  - c. Reasons for recommendation of the proposed name. If being named after an individual, this should include such justifications as civic involvement of honoree, historical context of honoree in the City of Westminster community, and related information. The biography should include sufficient information about the individual. Contact information for key individuals (such as family members, friends, work colleagues, etc.) who can provide additional background, context, etc., should also be provided.
  - d. The rationale of naming or renaming a City of Westminster property, an explanation of how the name or individual is or has been associated with the property to be named or renamed. The submittal must include a narrative outlining the community accomplishments/donations attributable specifically to the named individual.
  - e. Upon receipt of the written proposal, there shall be a waiting period of ninety days to allow staff to convene a committee for vetting and researching the proposed name or renaming. During this time, staff will prepare an agenda memorandum to submit to advisory boards, including but not limited to Parks, Recreation, Libraries, and Open Space Advisory Board (PRLOSAB); Historic Landmark Board (HLB); Inclusivity Board (IB); and



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Westminster Historical Society. This may include notification of surrounding neighborhoods if a site is proposed to be renamed. Notification methods for the surrounding neighborhoods could encompass the use of signage, mailers, or a survey link seeking feedback. Upon advisory boards review, Staff will forward information to City Council for their review and consideration in a public meeting.

Depending on the type of facility that is proposed regarding naming/renaming, the request will be forward to the appropriate advisory board for a recommendation.

- f. After the public meeting is conducted, City Council shall formally consider the naming or renaming of a City of Westminster property via resolution.
  - g. If City Council approves of the proposed name or renaming of a site, a minimum of six months will be required to order and install new signage, prepare for the appropriate naming or renaming event, and change all publicly recorded documents and websites associated with the name change
2. The following guidelines shall apply to the naming or renaming of a City of Westminster property after an individual:
- a. The name of an individual may be considered only if it is determined that it is in the public interest to honor the individual or the individual's family for historical or commemorative reasons.
  - b. The name of an individual shall not be given consideration unless the individual portrays a positive image and is or was associated with or made a significant contribution to City of Westminster properties being named or renamed or to the area in which the property is located.
  - c. Public property shall not be named after a former City employee until the person has been employed by the City for at least twenty-five years, retired for at least five years, and is known for an outstanding career in public service.
  - d. Names of individuals who have made significant contributions to the City of Westminster shall be preferred over names of national figures.
  - e. The individual served as a publicly elected official in or from Westminster.



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- f. An individual's epithet, nickname, or title may be used if it would provide a more appropriate, interesting, or enduring name. If an epithet, nickname, or title is proposed as part of the naming, the individual for whom the park or open space is being named must agree to the name. In the case of a deceased individual, the person's spouse or children (if spouse is no longer living) or parents (if spouse is no longer living and/or the person did not have children) (in that priority order) must agree to the name.
3. To avoid duplication or confusing nomenclature, Staff will review existing site names in the city as well as those in neighboring communities when considering name suggestions.
4. For all areas, a site name based on a natural feature, geographic location, or historical event is preferred. Naming or renaming of a site for an individual or organization should be reserved for occasions where the person or organization made a significant contribution to the community over an extended period of time; is a universally celebrated group, organization or individual; and/or the individual or organization is donating the land to be used for the site's defined purpose.
5. Names of corporations or civic groups will be considered if they had a significant impact in the establishment or development of the City of Westminster, State of Colorado, or the United States of America.
6. Names that could be considered derogatory, obscene, blasphemous, or in poor taste based on community standards shall not be considered.

## II. **Naming Process for New Sites**

1. The City of Westminster will utilize an internal Site Naming Committee, comprised of members such as Department Director(s) city staff, and representatives from the City Manager's Office (CMO) and/or City Attorney's Office (CAO). In cases of formal joint operation or ownership with another agency, said agency will be included in the Site Naming Committee
2. The Committee will engage in both internal and external solicitation of names, followed by a thorough review of submissions based on predefined naming criteria. To enhance transparency, Staff will seek input from other advisory boards, such as the Inclusivity Board (IB); Historic Landmark Board (HLB) Parks; Recreation, Libraries, and Open Space Advisory Board (PRLOSAB); and Westminster Historical Society whenever feasible.



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3. Upon the Site Naming Committee's recommendation and review and approval by the appropriate advisory board, the proposed name will be presented to the City Council for review during a public meeting, seeking ultimate approval.
4. For historical documentation, any named site should feature a plaque or similar recognition detailing the significance of the name, which may include information posted on the City's website. Consistency across the City will be ensured by consulting the Division responsible for primary City communication.
5. In the past, new parks have often been named after places or landmarks associated with England, and many of the City's existing park names reflect this tradition. This practice has demonstrated its value in serving the City's interests while ensuring a legacy and meaningful representation of the City's values within its park and open space systems. Staff will maintain this priority when naming new parks in the future. Open spaces will typically be named after individuals, families, historical landmarks, geographic locations, or commonly referred-to areas within the City. This practice will be consistently prioritized with the acquisition of new open spaces.
6. City Facilities should reflect historical, cultural, geographical, or community significance and easy to recognize, spell, and pronounce.

### III. **Renaming Process of Existing Sites**

Proposals to rename sites are not encouraged although may be warranted, especially if the continuation of the name may compromise the public trust or reputation of the City. All potential renaming suggestions will be fully investigated and considered by the City of Westminster and potentially an internal Site Renaming Committee. The Site Renaming Committee should include, but are not limited to, the Department Director(s), city staff, representatives from CMO and/or CAO, and when possible, a member from a city advisory board. Critical examination should ensure that renaming of a site will not diminish the original justification for the name or the prior contributors. Renaming will follow the same procedures as naming a site. The Department initiating the renaming shall be responsible for costs of renaming the facility including any public notifications, replacement of signs (both on-site and any directional signs from City or State rights of way, reprinting of city materials, and similar costs. Individuals or groups requesting such name changes shall be responsible for costs of renaming facilities to be paid prior to the renaming based on an estimate provided by City staff.

### IV. **Policy Administration**

Once a City of Westminster property site is named or renamed, the name of the public property cannot be changed for 25 years. After an investigation by the city, if the



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name is found to be inappropriate considering new information, the City of Westminster and potentially an internal Site Renaming Committee will follow the same procedures as stated in the renaming process of existing sites.

The person(s) or group submitting the request may be responsible for covering all costs associated with the renaming, including new or refurbished signage, plaque, delivery, installation of concrete pad or other mounting surface, hardware, irrigation allowances, and other miscellaneous expenses.

The City of Westminster is responsible for communicating name changes to its citizens and other impacted parties. This includes posting updates on the City's website and using additional communication methods as needed.

The City of Westminster will review and revise this policy as needed.