

POLICY FOR STREET NAME CHANGES

File ID 38,082 Approved by Board of Public Works April 22, 2015

Purpose:

From time to time, citizens, businesses, organizations and elected officials desire to change the name of public and private streets within the City of Madison. The purpose of this policy is to outline the City's street naming policy and procedures in conjunction with these types of requests.

This policy recognizes the inconvenience and hardship placed upon citizens, businesses and organizations when changing existing street names. All street name changes shall be required to not only be in the best interest of the majority of those citizens residing on the street, but must also be in the best interest of the City of Madison and its Citizens.

In most instances the party requesting the street name change shall be responsible for the cost associated with implementing the street name change.

This policy shall not apply to street name changes initiated by the City of Madison or requested by any public safety agency.

Procedure:

1. Application Process:

A citizen, business, organization or elected official, hereinafter referred to as the "petitioner", files a petition with the City of Madison Engineer requesting the street name change(s). The petition shall be required to include the following:

- a. The legal name, address and contact information (address, phone number and email address) of the petitioner
- b. The reason(s) for the street name change(s).
- c. The current street name(s).
- d. The proposed street name(s) and any additional alternate names with indication of order of preference. All proposed street names shall conform to Chapter 10.34 of the City of Madison General Ordinances.
- e. Statement with signature by the petitioner agreeing to pay all costs associated with the request, including the cost of new street sign(s).
- f. The name and address of all owners and occupants of each parcel abutting the street proposed to be renamed, parcel address, the owner's and occupant's signature, and indication by a yes (supported) or no (not supported) signifying the owners and occupants position regarding the proposed name change.
- g. A legible map showing and labeling the location of the street requested to be renamed.

- h. Additional information may be required at the discretion of the City of Madison Engineer.
 - i. Upon receipt of the petition by the City of Madison Engineer, the petition shall be reviewed for content and completeness. Any petition not containing all of the above required information shall not be accepted by the City of Madison Engineer to begin the process for review or approval.
2. **Application Review Process:** City Engineering shall carefully review the petition and circulate to appropriate staff and City agencies for comment in order to determine if the proposed street name change is in compliance with all applicable laws and ordinances and also is in the best interest of the City of Madison and its citizens. Criteria for this review shall include, but not be limited to:
- a. The proposed street name shall comply with the requirements of Chapter 10.34 of the City of Madison General Ordinances any other City of Madison ordinances or policies in effect at the time of the street name change.
 - b. Names should be pleasant sounding and appropriate. They should also be easy to read and pronounce. This being so that the public (children in particular) can handle the name in an emergency situation.
 - c. Names which have homonyms (other words pronounced similarly but spelled differently) shall not be used on any street (examples: Days Lane / Daze; Disk Drive / Disc Lane).
 - d. Names that are difficult to pronounce or difficult to spell should be avoided. (Examples: Reign, Poinsettia, Weimaraner).
 - e. Two-word names or one-word names that can be confused as two-word names should be avoided. This alleviates the problem of two words being combined into one word, or vice versa, when used. (examples: Clearlake, Clear Lake, Brookhaven, Baytree).
 - f. Except where historically significant, avoid using proper names as street names. (examples: David Wilson Road, Elly May Ln).
 - g. Street names that include a business name should be avoided.
 - h. Street name changes for arterial or collector streets shall be avoided Where arterial and collector streets are involved, additional public involvement may be required.
 - h. The City of Madison shall remain unbiased in its choice of approving or changing street names as the City has citizens from many diverse cultural backgrounds. Care should be taken to approve street names that are likely not to offend or deter a substantial number of citizens from living in any portion of the City of Madison.
 - i. Street name change requests based solely upon personal preference(s) shall not be recommended for approved.

3. **Approval Process:** After consultation with appropriate staff, agencies and the Alderperson of the district in which the street resides, the City Engineer shall determine whether or not the proposed street name change will be supported by the City Engineering Division and should continue forward onto the approval process. If it has been determined that the petition does not meet the criteria for the City Engineer to support it for an approval, the information will be placed on file and closed. If it has been determined that the petition does meet the criteria for the City Engineer to support approval, the following process shall be followed:
 - a. City of Madison Engineering prepares an Engineering project number and resolution and schedules Common Council introduction of the resolution. Note: A receipt of payment from the petitioner to the City for costs incurred shall be a required condition of approval within the resolution.
 - b. City of Madison Engineering prepares a Class 1 public hearing notice and schedules publication with the official Madison newspaper. Certified direct mailings of the notice shall be sent to all property owners abutting the street (or portion thereof) to be renamed at least 10 days prior to the date of the public hearing.
 - c. Common Council introduces the resolution and then refers it to the Board of Public Work as lead. The Board of Public Works then shall refer the resolution to the Plan Commission and any other boards and/or committees deemed necessary as part of the approval process.
 - d. Traffic Engineering prepares cost estimates for signage changes that the petitioner will be responsible to pay. The estimated costs shall be forwarded to the petitioner upon the estimate being completed.
 - e. Referrals take action and send reports back to Common Council.
 - f. Common Council reviews referrals, holds a public hearing and takes final action on the resolution.
 - g. If the resolution is adopted, the City Clerk will then review any special conditions contained in the resolution, (receipt of payment from the petitioner to the City for costs incurred shall be a required condition of approval) and upon all conditions being satisfied shall record the street name change resolution with the Dane County Register of Deeds.
 - h. Upon the recording of the resolution, City of Madison Engineering shall initiate the process and notify the agencies necessary to complete the work flows (addressing, parcel data, mapping updates, street sign installations, etc.) required in conjunction with the street name change.
4. **Post Approval Process:** After the recording of the resolution, the following workflow shall be followed to complete the street name change;
 - a. City Engineering issues a street name change / address change letter with an effective date. The letter shall be utilized to notify the United States Postal Service, 911, utility companies serving the area and any other governmental agencies that may have an interest in the name change.

- b. The issuance of the letter shall provide authorization for Traffic Engineering to manufacture all signs and appurtenances necessary to change the street name in the field and install them by the effective date noted in the letter.
- c. Individual Notices of address changes: Each of the property owners affected shall be individually responsible to notify all persons and agencies of which they have personal, legal or business relationships with.
- d. City Engineering shall draft and record a Correction Instrument against all affected lots of recorded Subdivision Plat(s) or Certified Survey Map(s) that originally dedicated and/or named the street of which the name has been changed. This shall be done to ensure the street name change will be cross referenced within the Tract Index of the Dane County Register of Deeds with all affected subdivided lots.