

**STATEMENTS OF POLICIES FOR THE DETERMINATION AND PLACEMENT  
OF MEMORIALS AND PLAQUES IN PARKS  
AND RECREATION AREAS WITHIN THE MADISON PARK SYSTEM**

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide an effective process for determining the acceptance, appropriateness, and placement of memorials, park improvements and related plaques within the Madison Park System; and

To establish a policy, criteria, and procedure for approval of memorial tributes and plaques within the Madison Park System.

NOTE: Memorials, plaques and/or tributes to be placed in Greenways are under the purview of the City Engineering Division. The Park Commission may make a recommendation to the Board of Public Works, but the final decision is made by the Board of Public Works.

This policy is to prevent the intrusion of a proliferation of memorials, plaques, and tributes that do not enhance the public's experiences in park areas.

**POLICY**

The City of Madison Board of Park Commissioners is the approving authority for accepting donations and approving the placement of memorials, plaques and tributes in Park and Recreation areas within the Madison Park System.

It shall be Park Commission policy not to approve the placement of memorials, plaques, and tributes in Parks and Recreation Areas that may impact the park visitor's experience and enjoyment of Parks and Recreation areas and facilities.

The Superintendent of Parks shall use the following criteria to determine what memorials, plaques, and/or tributes are to be recommended for Park Commission approval.

Memorials, plaques, or tributes should benefit the general public as a first priority – and the benefit to the donor, etc., should be a secondary goal, so as not to turn park areas into a cemetery-type atmosphere.

The relationship between the value of the gift and the prominence of the plaque will be consistent.

All costs, including upkeep/or replacement, associated with memorials, plaques, and/or tributes, shall be borne by the requesting party unless otherwise directed by the Park Commission.

The following are examples of recommended acceptable donations for memorials, plaques, and/ or tributes in parks:

- a. New and replacement trees approved by the Parks Planning Section. Plaques may be included but must first be approved by the Parks Planning Section. See "Acceptable Memorial Plaques"
- b. New or replacement park furniture, i.e. benches, picnic tables, play equipment, etc. See "Acceptable Memorial Plaques."
- c. New or replacement facilities such as gazebos, restrooms, shelters, swimming pools, basketball or tennis courts, etc.

All requests for memorials, plaques, park furniture or facilities shall be reviewed by the Parks Planning staff. They shall coordinate the submission with the donor, and develop

and follow the standards used for other park improvements. The Superintendent of Parks will forward recommended requests to the Park Commission for approval.

The Parks Division will not bear responsibility for major maintenance and repairs and/or replacement of vandalized, lost, or stolen memorials, plaques, or tributes. A 25% endowment is required to cover the costs of routine maintenance and vandalism repairs, but not replacements.

Memorials, plaques, or tributes will be considered as an improvement/or enhancement in park areas, and not as an attraction separate from the selected park design.

**Acceptable Plaques:**

Plaques may be added to a memorial donation. The plaques may not be a physical obstruction or addition to the memorial, i.e. engraved boulders.

**Plaques for trees:**

Plaques must be placed flush to the ground – thus allowing ease of turf maintenance. A memorial plaque must include the tree species botanical and common names and then the following language: “In Memory of...” “In Honor of...” No poems, songs, pictures or eulogies will be allowed.

The cost of the plaque is the responsibility of the donor.

**Plaques for benches:**

The plaque must be attached to the bench or concrete base. It may also be engraved in the bench.

A memorial plaque may only have the following language: “In Memory of...” “In Honor of...” etc. No poems, songs, pictures or eulogies will be allowed.

The cost of the plaque is the responsibility of the donor.

**PROCEDURE**

Individuals or organizations shall submit requests for approval of memorials, plaques, or tributes in writing to the Superintendent of Parks.

Parks Planning staff and the Superintendent will review written requests to determine whether the request fits Parks Division Policy. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Park Commission for approval.

Trees, benches, and most play equipment do not require Park Commission approval. Parks Planning staff review and the Superintendent’s approval are acceptable. Larger ticket items such as shelters, gazebos, swimming pools, etc, will require Park Commission approval and, if large matching funds are necessary, Common Council approval.