



Municipal Naming Policy

1. Purpose:

To establish a formal process for the naming, renaming, or dedication of Town-owned buildings, facilities, parks, streets, and public spaces.

This policy ensures that names assigned to municipal assets reflect the Town's history, values, geography, and community service while preserving the integrity and dignity of public property.

2. Authority:

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, §§ 3 and 15A, the Select Board has the authority to manage and control all Town property and to approve the naming of Town-owned real and personal property.

Recommendations may be initiated by the Select Board, Town Administrator, departments, boards, or commissions, or by citizen petition in accordance with this policy.

3. Scope:

This policy applies to:

- Town buildings, rooms, and facilities;
- Public parks, fields, and open spaces;
- Streets, roadways, bridges, and trails under Town jurisdiction;
- Monuments, memorials, and other physical Town assets; and
- Dedications of portions of Town facilities (e.g., benches, trees, rooms, or plaques).

This policy does **not** apply to school facilities under the jurisdiction of the School Committee, which may maintain a separate policy consistent with this framework.

4. Guiding Principles:

Naming decisions should-

- a) Recognize individuals, groups, or organizations who have made extraordinary contributions to the Town of Plainville through public service, civic leadership, philanthropy, or historic significance.
- b) Reflect the geographic location, natural features, or historic events associated with the site.
- c) Promote community identity, inclusivity, and respect for Plainville's heritage.
- d) Avoid names that could cause confusion, be controversial, or diminish the reputation of the Town.
- e) Prevent duplication of names already in use on other Town properties or streets.



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5. Categories of Naming:

- a) Honorary or Memorial Naming
 - May recognize a deceased individual who rendered distinguished service to the Town, the Commonwealth, or the nation.
 - May also recognize living individuals for exceptional contributions to Plainville's public life or community development.
 - Ordinarily, names honoring living persons shall not be considered until at least one year after retirement or completion of public service.
- b) Descriptive or Geographic Naming:
 - May reference prominent natural, geographic, or historic features, neighborhoods, or local traditions associated with the site.
 - May be used when a neutral or location-based identifier best suits the public interest (e.g., "South Street Park," "Turnpike Lake Trail").
- c) Commemorative or Donor Recognition:
 - When facilities or improvements are funded in whole or in part by private donation, the Town may consider naming recognition consistent with the value and nature of the contribution and this policy's ethical standards.

6. Application and Review Process:

- a) Initiation
 - A naming request may be initiated by the Select Board, Town Administrator, Town department, board or committee, or through a written citizen petition signed by at least 25 registered Plainville voters.
 - Requests must be submitted in writing to the Select Board's Office using the Town's Naming Request Form.
- b) Submission Requirements -
The proposal must include:
 - The proposed name and type of facility or location;
 - A statement of rationale describing the individual's contributions or the historical/geographic significance of the name;
 - Letters of support (if applicable); and
 - For memorial requests, confirmation that the individual is deceased or no longer in active service.
- c) Administrative Review
 - The Town Administrator shall circulate the proposal for review and comment to affected departments (e.g., Facilities, DPW, Recreation, Fire, Police, Historical Commission).
 - The Town Administrator shall compile recommendations and forward them to the Select Board for public discussion.
- d) Public Input



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- The Select Board shall hold a public meeting or hearing prior to final action on a proposed naming.
- Notice shall be posted at least seven (7) days in advance in accordance with the Open Meeting Law (M.G.L. c. 30A, §§18–25).
- e) Select Board Action
 - The Select Board shall vote by majority to approve, modify, or deny the naming request.
 - Approval shall be recorded in the Board's minutes and, where applicable, memorialized by resolution.
- f) Recordkeeping and Implementation
 - Upon approval, the Town Administrator shall ensure that appropriate signage, plaques, or records are updated.
 - The Facilities Department or designee shall oversee fabrication and installation consistent with Town standards.

7. Duration and Renaming:

- The Town retains full authority to modify, relocate, or remove any name, plaque, or monument as circumstances require.
- Renaming shall occur only under exceptional circumstances, such as major redevelopment, public confusion, or evidence that the existing name no longer serves the public interest.

8. Donor and Sponsorship Naming:

When naming is linked to a financial or in-kind contribution:

- The proposed recognition must be consistent with the Town's ethics, procurement, and gift acceptance policies.
- The Select Board reserves the right to approve or deny any donor naming request at its sole discretion.
- Donor names shall not imply ownership, control, or influence over Town operations.
- The duration of naming rights shall be defined in a written donor agreement approved by the Select Board.

9. Records and Historical Preservation:

All naming actions shall be documented and maintained by the Town Clerk in a permanent record of municipal property names.



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10. Exceptions:

The Select Board may, by majority vote, grant exceptions to this policy for unique or extraordinary circumstances, provided that such exceptions are consistent with law and the public interest.

11. Effective Date:

This policy shall take effect upon adoption by the Select Board and shall apply to all future naming or dedication requests.

Attachments:

- Appendix A: Naming Request Form
- Appendix B: Criteria Checklist for Evaluating Naming Proposals
- Appendix C: Sample Donor Agreement Outline

First Reading: November 24, 2025

Second & Final Reading: December 8, 2025

Adopted by the Select Board: December 8, 2025



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Appendix A - Naming Request Form

Instructions:

This form must be completed and submitted to the Select Board's Office for all proposals to name, rename, or dedicate Town-owned buildings, facilities, parks, streets, rooms, or public spaces. Incomplete forms may delay review.

1. Applicant Information

Name: _____

Organization (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email(s): _____

Are you submitting this request:

- ☐ As an individual
☐ On behalf of a Town board/committee/departments
☐ As a citizen petition (requires signatures of 25 registered Plainville voters)
☐ Other: _____

2. Proposed Naming Information

Proposed Name: _____

Type of Asset:

- ☐ Building ☐ Room/Interior Space ☐ Park/Open Space ☐ Field ☐ Street/Trail
☐ Monument/Memorial ☐ Other: _____

Location/Facility to Be Named: _____

3. Rationale for Proposed Name

Please attach a written statement addressing the following:



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- Reason for the proposed name and its relevance to the facility or the Town.
- Description of the individual/group's contributions, if applicable.
- Historical, geographic, or cultural significance, if applicable.
- Explanation of how the proposal aligns with the Guiding Principles of the Naming Policy.

Statement Attached: ☐ Yes ☐ No
(If no, please include rationale below.)

4. Supporting Documentation

Please check all included materials:

- ☐ Letters of support
- ☐ Biographical or historical information
- ☐ Maps, photos, or reference materials
- ☐ Verification the individual is deceased or has completed public service
(for memorial or honorary naming)
- ☐ Petition signatures (if applicable)
- ☐ Donor commitment or description of contribution (if applicable)

5. Applicant Certification

I certify that the information submitted is accurate to the best of my knowledge and that this request complies with the Town of Plainville Naming Policy.

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Submit to:

Plainville Select Board Office

190 South Street, Plainville, MA 02762

Email: bnoble@plainville.ma.us



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Appendix B - Criteria Checklist for Evaluating Naming Proposals

To be completed by Town staff and/or the Select Board during review.

Use the checklist below to determine whether the proposed naming meets the standards outlined in the policy.

A checkmark indicates compliance; explanatory notes should be added where appropriate.

1. Alignment with Guiding Principles

Criteria	Yes	No	Notes
Recognizes extraordinary service, civic contribution, or historical significance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reflects geographic, natural, or historic features	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Promotes community identity and respect for Plainville's heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoids confusion, controversy, or reputational harm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does not duplicate an existing Town name or street	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

2. Eligibility Requirements

Requirement	Yes	No	Notes
For honorary naming: individual is deceased or retired for at least one year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For geographic or descriptive naming: clear relevance to location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For donor recognition: complies with Town ethics and gift acceptance policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Proposed name does not imply ownership or control by a private donor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3. Submission Completeness

Item	Yes	No	Notes
Completed Naming Request Form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Statement of rationale attached	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Letters of support included (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Required historical or biographical documentation provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



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Item	Yes	No	Notes
Petition includes 25 valid voter signatures (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Relevant departments consulted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No legal, procurement, or property-related conflicts identified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

4. Final Considerations

Item	Yes	No	Notes
Public hearing/meeting held in accordance with Open Meeting Law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Select Board vote conducted and recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Signage, plaques, or implementation steps defined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Overall Recommendation:

☐ Approve ☐ Approve with modifications ☐ Deny

Reviewed by: _____

Date: _____



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Appendix C

Sample Donor Agreement Outline
(Town of Plainville – Naming and Recognition Agreement)

This outline may be adapted for any donor-related naming proposal associated with Town-owned buildings, facilities, parks, or improvements.

1. Parties

- **Town of Plainville**, acting through its Select Board
- **Donor Name / Organization:** _____

2. Purpose of Agreement

A concise statement describing:

- The donor's financial or in-kind contribution
- The Town's intent to provide naming recognition consistent with the Naming Policy
- The municipal asset or portion thereof to which the naming applies

3. Description of Contribution

Specify:

- Total financial contribution or value of in-kind donation
- Payment schedule or delivery timeline
- Any conditions attached to the donation (must comply with Town's gift acceptance policies)

4. Naming Recognition

Include:

- Exact name to be used
- Location (building, room, park, field, monument, etc.)
- Expected signage or plaque description
- Public communications or ceremonies, if applicable
- Statement that naming does not imply ownership, operational control, or governance rights



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5. Duration of Naming Rights

- Fixed term (e.g., 10, 20, 30 years), or
- Perpetual naming subject to the Town's retained authority under Section 7 of the policy
- Conditions under which the Town may modify, relocate, or remove the name (e.g., redevelopment, facility closure, reputational concerns)

6. Maintenance, Signage, and Installation

Clarify:

- Responsibility for fabrication and installation costs
- Town standards for materials, size, and placement
- Maintenance expectations for the named asset

7. Compliance and Restrictions

State that:

- The agreement must comply with M.G.L. c. 44, c. 268A, procurement rules, and Town policies
- Donor recognition must not conflict with Town operations or create endorsements
- No marketing or advertising rights are conferred unless explicitly authorized by law

8. Termination or Renaming

Outline:

- Circumstances under which naming may be rescinded
- Donor notification procedures
- Whether any portion of the contribution is refundable (typically non-refundable)

9. Miscellaneous Provisions

- Governing law (Commonwealth of Massachusetts)
 - Amendments require written approval of the Select Board
 - Entire agreement clause
 - Signatures of authorized representatives
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10. Signature Page

For the Town of Plainville

By: _____

Chair, Select Board

Date: _____

Donor

By: _____

Name & Title: _____

Date: _____