

## **Town of Whitestown Street Naming Guidance Document**

Pursuant to Indiana Code § 36-7-4-405(c), the Town Council President of the Town of Whitestown (“Town Council President” and “Town” respectively), has the authority to name and rename streets. In order to assist the Town Council President in naming and renaming streets, the Town Council provides the following guidance.

### **A. Recognition of an Official Street Name**

Not all of the public ways within the Town (such as alleys or small access roads) should be given official recognition by the Town Council President. Accordingly, in determining whether a public way should be given official recognition and be named by the Town Council President, the Town Council President should consider the following factors:

1. How many addressable structures (whether stand-alone facilities or multiple addresses in a single structure) are on the street? (If there are fewer than three structures, this factor leans towards not naming the street).
2. Does the Town own the right-of-way for the proposed street?
3. Do the rights under the right-of-way continue indefinitely?
4. Is the proposed street currently being used for motor vehicle ingress and egress?

### **B. Factors to Consider in Naming a Street**

In order to avoid confusion among citizens of the Town and Public Safety Agencies, the Town Council President should take precaution to follow certain parameters and guidelines when naming a street. The following is a list of factors that the Town Council President should consider when assigning a name to a street (whether naming a street for the first time, or renaming an existing street):

1. Consider the “root name” of the street. “Root name,” as used in this document, refers to the name of the street exclusive of any ordinal directions (i.e. N, S, E, W, etc.) or suffixes (i.e. Street, Lane, Avenue, etc.).
2. In order for ease of marking on street signs and maps, root names should generally be no longer than twenty-four (24) characters in length.
3. The root name of a street should generally not include hyphens, apostrophes, other punctuation, or symbols.
4. Avoid root names which are duplicates of existing streets. For example, the Town Council President should avoid naming a street “Maple Avenue” when another street in the Town is already named “Maple Street.” However, duplicate root names may be appropriate when the streets intersect within the same subdivision or other similar scenario.

5. Avoid root names which sound similar to the root name of already existing streets. The Town Council president shall exercise his or her discretion in determining whether any root name sounds similar to the root name of an existing street.
6. Attempt to have streets carry the same root name and suffix throughout their length in the Town. Exceptions may occur (1) at major intersections (i.e. signalized intersections of major highways) where the cross street may change names for convenience purposes; (2) where opposing entrances to different subdivisions would make differing street names convenient; or (3) in any other similar instance.
7. In order to avoid confusion, the root name of a street should not include standard ordinal directionals (i.e. N, S, E, W, etc.) or suffixes. Accordingly, a street should not be named "S. South Street Road" or other similarly confusing name.
8. The Town Council President should take caution not to name streets after businesses or individuals except where it can be demonstrated that a particular business or individual has some historic or otherwise significant importance to the Town. The Town Council President should consider conferring with the Whitestown Plan Commission and/or the Town Council when the Town Council President desires to name a street after an individual or business. The advice of the Plan Commission or the Town Council should guide the Town Council President in making the best decision for the Town.
9. The Town Council President should take caution not to name a street after an existing subdivision unless that street is within that existing subdivision.
10. Before renaming an existing street, the Town Council President should consider whether a majority of the abutting property owners approve of the new name. However, the Town Council President shall not be bound by the will of the majority of the property owners.

### **C. Petitions to Name or Rename Streets**

The Town Council President may name streets with or without a petition from affected landowners. However, it is advisable that the Town Council President seek the guidance of the property owners whose property directly abuts the street which is to be named or renamed. Property owners may also petition the Town Council President to consider naming or renaming a street. The Town Council President must consider the following petitions:

1. Petitions to Name a New Street – Abutting property owners may petition the Town Council President to name a new street and may suggest the name that those property owners desire. However, in the case of a petition to name a new street, the Town Council President shall only be required to consider those petitions which are approved by written consent of at least two-thirds (2/3) of all abutting property owners. The decision whether to name (and what to name) a new street shall rest in the discretion of the Town Council President under the guidelines outlined in this document.

2. Petitions to Rename an Existing Street – Abutting property owners may petition the Town Council President to rename an existing street and may suggest the name that those property owners desire. However, in the case of a petition to rename an existing street, the Town Council President shall only be required to consider those petitions which are approved by unanimous written consent of all abutting property owners. The decision whether to name (and what to name) a new street shall rest in the discretion of the Town Council President under the guidelines outlined in this document.

## **D. Planning Considerations**

In addition to the general street naming guidelines discussed in this document, it is beneficial to the Town for the Town Council President to consider certain planning strategies in naming streets. The planning considerations that the Town Council president should consider include, but are not limited to:

1. Consider naming streets in certain areas (such as subdivisions) pursuant to a theme (for example names which correspond with names of trees).
2. Consider naming streets consistent with the character of the area of the Town where the street is located.
3. Consider using one street (for example Main Street) as a reference point from which all numbered streets increase.

## **E. After a Street is Officially Named**

After a street is officially named, the Town Council President, or his/her designee, should advise the Town Council and Whitestown Plan Commission of his or her decision. The Town Council President, or his/her designee, should also take the necessary steps to ensure that the official name of the street is publicized and provided to all necessary emergency services, government agencies, and businesses.