

Administrative Regulation

A. Subject:

Tribute Program

B. Purpose:

The City of North Port values the widespread public support of residents and patrons who donate to the City's Tribute Program to enhance the City's parks, facilities, open spaces, and trails. Recognizing the need for continued community support, the Tribute Program enables residents and patrons to support the City of North Port park system through donations that may be tax deductible pursuant to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) provisions. The City will use Tribute Program donations to purchase monument features include trees, benches, pavers, and other features as approved by the Parks and Recreation Department Director or designee. The City will not accept any physical monument or other item in lieu of a monetary donation under the Tribute Program.

C. Objective:

To encourage donations from individuals, businesses, and non-profit organizations while at the same time managing aesthetic impacts and mitigating on-going maintenance costs.

To treat all donation requests fairly and responsibly.

To establish standards, procedures, and criteria for the installation and care of City monument features on City-owned properties managed by the Parks and Recreation Department.

D. Definitions:

Donation: The gifting of money to the City for the purchase of a monument.

Honoree: The name of a person appearing on a monument. No honoree shall be a historical person unless related to the donor.

Monument: A distinctive attribute owned and placed by the City within a City-owned park, facility, open space, trail, or other City-owned property managed by the Parks and Recreation Department, including but not limited to a tree, bench, paver, or other Department-approved feature, inclusive of its plaque and/or engraving as applicable. Monuments shall be selected by the Department as a means of the City's expression and official sentiments consistent with the City's Code, standards, aesthetics, mission, values, policies, and best interests. As used in this policy, a *monument* does not include nor it is intended to create any monument as referenced in Florida Statutes Section 872.02.

Routine Maintenance: General inspection and cleaning of a monument.

E. Procedures:

1. The City of North Port, Parks and Recreation Department (the “Department”) will identify the specific monuments available under the Tribute Program and establish a corresponding fee to cover the cost of each monument, labor and materials for installation, plaque and engraving (as applicable), routine maintenance during an established period, and a letter of completion. The City may accept donations towards a monument from public and private sources to enhance City-owned parks, facilities, opens spaces, trails, and other City-owned property managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. Monuments are symbolic of the donation and do not entitle the donor to ownership of the monument. Each monument is City-owned property, and the City should endeavor to maintain the monument during its established routine maintenance period.
2. Applicants must submit a complete Tribute Program Application form to the Department at the Morgan Family Community Center, 6207 West Price Boulevard, North Port, Florida 34291, for review and processing.
3. The Department shall review and either accept or reject each application. If accepted, the Department, with the assistance of the City’s Development Services Department, shall determine the appropriate monument, engraving, and location for placement.
4. The Department shall contact applicants to discuss and finalize the details of each donation and monument request prior to the City’s acceptance of the donation. No monument shall be ordered or installed before the Department has received payment of the donation in full.
5. The Department shall verify that the name of an honoree requested to appear on a plaque or paver belongs to an actual person, whether living or deceased. The Department may require an applicant provide any additional information reasonably needed to verify this information.

F. Standards:

1. Approval Authority – The Department has an interest in ensuring that installed monuments are commercial grade products of high quality and the style, appearance, durability, and ease of maintenance are appropriate for the chosen location. Therefore, the Department shall purchase and install each monument based on its determination of durability and what best represents the City’s esthetics, history, and local culture.
2. Appearance – The Department has an interest in ensuring the best appearance and aesthetic quality of the City-owned property it manages. Monuments must be installed in a manner that ensures there is no substantial change to the character of the monument’s intended use or to the selected location.
3. Fee – The Department has an interest in ensuring the fee charged satisfies the full cost of a monument, including but not limited to application review and processing, and monument purchase, installation, and maintenance, with no on-going maintenance cost negatively impacting the resources available to maintain other City-owned property. The donation fee shall be calculated to include the (i) retail cost of the monument and any plaque or engraving; (ii) materials

for monument installation; (iii) routine maintenance during the established period; and (iv) related staff and labor costs.

4. Replacement and Removal – If during the donation period a monument is damaged beyond repair due to an act of God, vandalism, or other unforeseen circumstance, the Department shall replace the monument one (1) time with a similar monument, if available. The Department has no obligation to replace a damaged monument more than once during the donation period. The Department has no obligation to maintain, repair, or replace a monument following expiration of the donation period.
5. City Property – All monuments and plaques are City-owned property at all times and shall be disposed of like any other surplus City-owned asset or property at any time and at the conclusion of a monument’s donation period. The Department’s placement of a monument plaque or engraved paver is in no way an endorsement of the donor. The Department may remove a monument, plaque, or engraving at any time and for any reason as described herein.

G. Criteria:

1. Site – The Department, with the assistance of the Development Services Department, will determine the appropriate monument and location for placement based on the need of the property requested and availability. A monument must not interfere with the intended current or future use of the property where it is located or require the relocation of any equipment or infrastructure to accommodate placement.
2. Plaques – Each monument tree and bench are eligible to include a recognition plaque during its donation period. The Department shall purchase all plaques through an approved vendor to ensure the highest quality, lifespan, and durability. The donation fee for a monument tree or bench will include all related plaque costs. Plaques will be installed as follows:
 - a. Tree – Installed and mounted in the ground near the base of the tree.
 - b. Bench – Installed and directly affixed to the seatback.
3. Pavers – Each monument paver is eligible to include a recognition engraving during its donation period. The City shall have each paver engraved through an approved vendor to ensure the highest quality, lifespan, and durability. The donation fee for a monument paver will include all related engraving costs.
4. Monument Message – The Department shall determine, in its sole discretion and in accordance with this policy, the placement of each plaque and paver, and the content and appearance of each recognition plaque and engraving. The Department, in its sole discretion, may revise, reject, or omit any requested content or name and/or application. All decisions regarding applications, recognition plaques, and engraving messages are made at the Department’s sole discretion and are final. Donors may request the City place any one of the following messages on a plaque or paver:

Option A) The City of North Port expresses its sincere thanks to (name of donator) for donating this (tree/bench/paver) in honor of (name of honoree)

Option B) In honor of (name of honoree)

Option C) In loving memory of (name of honoree) (date – date)

Option D) With thanks to (name of honoree)

5. Tree Selection – Donors may request any monument tree from a preselected list of shade and ornamental trees selected by the Department. All tree options must appear on the City’s master tree list. Trees shall be planted in site specific locations, based on location needs and conditions. All trees shall be approximately 8-10 feet tall with a 2–3-inch caliper upon planting. The Department shall purchase all trees from a City-approved vendor to ensure each tree is free from pests and disease, and City standards for type, foliage size, texture, and color are met. All decisions regarding monument trees are made at the Department’s sole discretion and are final.
6. Bench Selection – Monument benches shall be made from an eco-friendly recycled plastic in City approved colors. The Department shall purchase all benches from a City-approved vendor to ensure each bench is of the highest quality for life expectancy and durability. All decisions regarding benches are made at the Department’s sole discretion and are final.
7. Paver Selection – Monument pavers shall be available on a limited basis and only at select locations as determined by the Department. The Department shall purchase all pavers from a City-approved vendor to ensure each paver is of the highest quality for life expectancy and durability. All decisions regarding pavers are made at the Department’s sole discretion and are final.
8. Donation Period – A donation authorizes the designation of a monument for a set period of time, the donation period for monuments are as follows:
 - a. Trees and Benches – The donation period for a monument tree or bench is five (5) years. At the conclusion of the donation period a donor may make an additional donation to renew the donation period. Payment of the donation renewal fee will extend the donation period of the tree or bench for an additional five (5) years. At the conclusion of the donation period the Department may remove any plaque associated with the monument.
 - b. Pavers – The donation period for a monument paver is ten (10) years. At the conclusion of its donation period a paver may remain in place for the length of its useful life, as determined by the Department.
9. Installation – The Department shall determine the installation timeline for each monument based on availability, delivery window, and staffing.

H. Policy and Message Content:

1. Non-Public Forum – All monuments are maintained as non-public forums. In furtherance of the Tribute Program, the Department exercises sole, final, and absolute discretion over all elements of the Program, including but not limited to donations, the selection, placement, maintenance, and removal of monuments, the information the Department displays on monuments, and the ability and eligibility to display information on a monument. The Department has full control over the acceptance or rejection of a donation and full editorial control over the placement, content, and appearance of a monument and a monument’s plaque and/or engraving. The Department’s decision regarding the appropriateness of a donation, a monument, and a monument’s message is final. The Department may revise, reject, or omit the content of a message on any plaque or paver in its sole discretion. All messages must comply with the City’s Code, policies, and branding standards regarding its font, color, size, and message.
2. Vision, Mission, and Values – The Department must not reject a donation based on the donor or the donor’s viewpoint(s). However, the Department may reject any donation, decline any application, and/or remove any monument or portion thereof at any time which in actuality or public perception, as determined by the Department in its sole, absolute, and final discretion, is inconsistent with the City’s standards, sentiments, vision, mission, values, policies, aesthetics, or best interests, or is not appropriate for City speech.

The City of North Port, Florida does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, family, or religious status in administration of its programs, activities, or services. The Department shall not administer this Program in an unlawfully discriminatory manner, nor deny participation in or the benefits of same to any individual based on that individual’s race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, family or religious status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or physical characteristic.

I. Not an Endorsement of Donor:

The Department’s acceptance of a donation under this program and the Department’s display of a message on a monument plaque or paver does not mean that the City endorses any aspect of the donor, or the donor’s action(s), organization(s), belief(s), viewpoint(s), product(s), or service(s), other than the Department’s gratitude for the donation as applicable under Option A. The Department’s display of a monument does not imply an affiliation with the donor or the donor’s organization(s), belief(s), viewpoint(s), product(s), or service(s). The City’s acceptance of an application and/or donation and/or choice to erect a monument with or without the City’s message is not the City directly or indirectly advocating or endorsing the donor generally, or the donor’s organization(s), belief(s), viewpoint(s), product(s), or service(s). Any implied affiliation is accidental. Any donation in which association with the donor may compromise the public’s perception of the City’s neutrality or its ability to act in the public interest will be rejected and/or removed.