



Kate Harrison
Councilmember District 4

ACTION CALENDAR
May 28th, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmembers Harrison and Davila
Subject: Referral to Public Works Commission to Rename Harold Way to “Dalai Lama Way”.

RECOMMENDATION

Referral to the Public Works Commission requesting changing the name of Harold Way to “Dalai Lama Way” in recognition of the Dalai Lama’s contributions to world peace and in recognition of the Buddhist community center at Harold Way.

BACKGROUND

The Dalai Lamas are the spiritual leaders of Tibetan Buddhists and are believed to be the physical manifestations of the Bodhisattva of Compassion. Bodhisattvas are realized beings, inspired by the wish to attain complete enlightenment, vowed to be reborn in the world to help all living beings. The title of Dalai Lama was established in 1416, when the First Dalai Lama was 25 years old and took an oath to spread the Buddhist teachings all over Tibet. Since then, there have been 14 Dalai Lamas, each being born in the same year of the death of the previous Dalai Lama, according to the belief that the Dalai Lama has a single soul reborn into 14 different bodies and will continue to be reborn as long as the Tibetan people require the institution. The current Dalai Lama, the 14th, has said “in the future, if the Dalai Lama’s institution is no longer relevant or useful and our present situation changes, then the Dalai Lama will cease to exist. At the present moment, however, the Dalai Lama’s institution is crucial to the Tibetan culture and to the Tibetan people.”¹

The current Dalai Lama was born July 6th 1935 in a small Tibetan village of Takser. At the age of two, a search party for the next Dalai Lama came to Takser bringing possessions that had belonged to the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, together with similar items that did not belong to him. In every case, the infant correctly identified those belonging to the Thirteenth Dalai Lama saying “it’s mine! It’s mine.” The Dalai Lama was raised in a monastery and was installed as the spiritual leader of Tibet at the age of five.

In 1950, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) of China invaded Tibet and the Dalai Lama was given full political authority over the Tibetan people. As the 15 year old leader of six million people facing the threat of war, His Holiness appointed Tibet’s first Prime Ministers

¹ <https://www.dalailama.com/the-dalai-lama/biography-and-daily-life/questions-answers>

and sent delegations abroad in the hope that other countries would intervene on Tibet's behalf. His pleas were not answered and he spent nine years trying to evade a full-scale military invasion by China while also placating the growing resentment against Tibetan people against the Chinese invaders. In 1959 he escaped to India and began working with the Prime Minister of India to rehabilitate Tibetan refugees, and has been in exile for the past 60 years.

From exile, the Dalai Lama instituted a democratic constitution for Tibet and an exile Parliament. In 1987 he delivered a Five Point Peace Plan for Tibet to the United States Congress. In 1989 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In 2001, the first direct democratic elections were held by the Tibetan people and he requested that his political power be dissolved in favor of democratically elected leadership. He has been a force for world peace and a political advocate and spiritual leader for the Tibetan people since 1959 despite inability to return to his country.

The Mangalam Center in Downtown Berkeley is a Buddhist community center rooted in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. The Mangalam center offers lectures, mindfulness programs, language classes, and secular and religious ceremonies for the public. The center also "adopted" the streets surrounding their building (Harold Way, Kittredge St, and Allston Way) by painting curbs, repairing street lights, trimming and mulching trees, and more. The Mangalam Center are excellent neighbors and their work renewing Harold Way has previously been recognized by Councilmember Harrison.

When the Tibetan Association of Northern California asked the City to consider renaming a street after the Dalai Lama in recognition of his work for peace, justice, and healing, and to recognize 60 years in exile, Harold Way seemed like an ideal spot. The street has already been adopted by Berkeley's Tibetan Buddhist community and any infrastructure changes will be de minimis because the entire street exists for only one block face and would require only two new signs (at Harold and Allston and at Harold and Kittredge).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Cost of creating and installing two street signs.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No impact.

CONTACT PERSON

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ATTACHMENTS:

- 1: City Council Rules of Procedure for changing street names

APPENDIX A. POLICY FOR NAMING AND RENAMING PUBLIC FACILITIES

Purpose

To establish a uniform policy regarding the naming and renaming of existing and future parks, streets, pathways and other public facilities.

Objective

A. To ensure that naming public facilities (such as parks, streets, recreation facilities, pathways, open spaces, public building, bridges or other structures) will enhance the values and heritage of the City of Berkeley and will be compatible with community interest.

Section 1 – Lead Commission

The City Council designates the following commissions as the 'Lead Commissions' in overseeing, evaluating, and ultimately advising the Council in any naming or renaming of a public facility. The lead commission shall receive and coordinate comment and input from other Commissions and the public as appropriate.

Board of Library Trustees

Parks and Recreation Commission –Parks, recreation centers, camps, plazas and public open spaces

Public Works Commission –Public buildings (other than recreation centers), streets and bridges or other structures in the public thoroughfare.

Waterfront Commission –Public facilities within the area of the City known as the Waterfront, as described in BMC 3.36.060.B.

Section 2 – General Policy

- A. Newly acquired or developed public facilities shall be named immediately after acquisition or development to ensure appropriate public identity.
- B. No public facility may be named for a living person, but this policy can be overridden with a 2/3 vote of the City Council.
- C. Public facilities that are renamed must follow the same criteria for naming new facilities. In addition, the historical significance and geographical reference of the established name should be considered when weighing and evaluating any name change.
- D. The City encourages the recognition of individuals for their service to the community in ways that include the naming of activities such as athletic events, cultural presentations, or annual festivals, which do not involve the naming or renaming of public facilities.
- E. Unless restricted by covenant, facilities named after an individual should not necessarily be considered a perpetual name.

Section 3 – Criteria for Naming of Public Facilities

When considering the naming of a new public facility or an unnamed portion or feature within an already named public facility (such as a room within the facility or a feature

