

Honorable Chair and Members
of the Ad Hoc Naming of Facilities Committee
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: Review of Application for Naming City Facility

RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager is forwarding an application to the City Council Ad Hoc Naming of Facilities Committee proposing that the Pueblo Community Recreation Center be renamed the “Ruben Ordaz Community Center.”

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

On June 17, 2008, the City Council approved Resolution 2008-81 establishing policies and procedures for naming City-owned land, buildings, and facilities. A primary goal of developing these policies and procedures was to ensure that the public had the opportunity to provide recommendations and input to the facility naming process. A web page was developed that contains information, forms, and instructions for public participation. The web address is <http://www.torranceca.gov/18100.htm>.

Along with the public, applications can be submitted from other sources including Council members, City staff, City agencies, or civic organizations. Members of the Facility Naming Committee can also make recommendations as long as there is compliance with the procedures currently in place.

An application has been submitted requesting that the Pueblo Community Recreation Center be renamed the “Ruben Ordaz Community Center,” in honor of the late Ruben Ordaz, Jr. He passed away on March 21, 2015. As stated in the application, Mr. Ordaz served for nearly fifty years as the Pueblo Homeowners Association President. During that time, he worked closely with the City’s Police and Community Services Department to advocate for his community. His leadership resulted in the creation of a recreation center, neighborhood park, increasing recreational opportunities for families, and a reduction in criminal activity in his community.

The policy does state, “The naming of City-owned land, buildings and facilities in honor of a deceased person shall generally not take place until after a minimum of a one-year waiting period unless the City Council determines that there are overriding considerations deviating from this

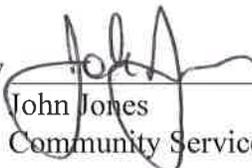
policy guidelines.” While it has not been a year since Mr. Ordaz’s passing, due to his direct role in raising funds that resulted in the construction of the original Community Recreation Center, dedicated in 1971, his contributions have already stood the test of time and the request to name a facility in his honor is not done on an emotional basis.

At this time, the Committee has three options to consider:

1. Deny the application: If the request is denied by the Committee, no further action is taken.
2. Approve the application as proposed: If the request is approved as proposed, staff will prepare the Committee’s recommendation to rename the Pueblo Recreation Center to be the “Ruben Ordaz Community Center,” to be reviewed at a regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council.
3. Recommend an alternate facility be named after Ruben Ordaz: If the Committee wishes to name an alternate public facility after Mr. Ordaz, staff will prepare the Committee’s recommendation to be reviewed at a regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council.

Respectfully submitted,

LeROY J. JACKSON
CITY MANAGER

By  _____
John Jones
Community Services Director

CONCUR:


LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

Attachments:

- A) Resolution No. 2008-81
- B) Application for Facility Naming
- C) Updated List of City Facilities Available for Naming
- D) Updated List of Facilities Previously Named
- E) Obituary of Ruben Ordaz, Jr. – Daily Breeze, March 27 – 29, 2015
- F) Article on El Pueblo – LA Times – May 5, 1985

RESOLUTION NO. 2008-81

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THIS
CITY OF TORRANCE ESTABLISHING POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES FOR THE NAMING OF CITY-OWNED
LAND, BUILDINGS, AND FACILITIES**

The City Council of the City of Torrance does hereby resolve as follows:

I. PURPOSE

To establish formal policies as a guide to the City Council in considering (1) appropriate names for City-owned land, buildings and facilities; (2) whether, and under what circumstances, such land, buildings, and facilities should be named or renamed in honor of individuals; and (3) the duration of naming rights of City-owned land, buildings and facilities.

II. SCOPE

This regulation is applicable to all City departments and offices responsible directly to the City Manager. It is also requested that elective offices and other independent offices and departments of the City comply with these procedures in the interest of administrative uniformity.

III. POLICY

In determining the names to be given to City-owned land, buildings and facilities, the City Council will give particular consideration to the following policy guidelines:

The City Council will consider candidate names for facilities whether submitted by Council members, City staff, City agencies, civic organizations, and/or the general public including names incorporating the name of Torrance where it is deemed important for civic or other reasons for a building or facility to be identified with the City.

Names that have recognizable geographic, topographic or historical significance associated with Torrance. In assessing this type of name, the City Council will take into consideration the recommendations from different bodies such as the Planning Commission or Torrance Historical Society.

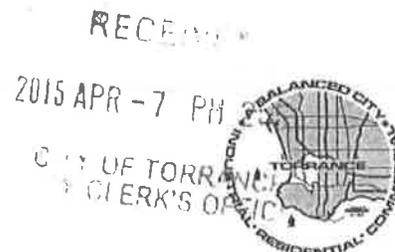
City-owned land, buildings and facilities may be named in honor of persons who have served the nation, the State of California and/or the City of Torrance in an exceptional and distinguished manner; and, where such action is warranted by a contribution or service which is deemed to be of major significance.

The naming of City-owned land, buildings and facilities in honor of a deceased person shall generally not take place until after a minimum of one-year waiting period unless the City Council determines that there are overriding considerations deviating from this policy guideline. This particular policy guideline is not intended in any way to reflect on the merits of any deceased individual who may have been a prominent civic leader. However, it is felt appropriate to establish some type of waiting period to ensure that an individual's accomplishments or contributions will stand the test of time; and that a decision shall not be made on an emotional basis immediately following a person's death.

Facility Naming Application

Contact information for person submitting application

Date:	March 30, 2015
Name:	Gene Barnett
Address:	3031 Torrance Blvd.
City/State/Zip Code:	Torrance, CA 90503
Contact Phone #:	310-618-2801



City of Torrance
3031 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90503
Phone: (310) 618-5880
Fax: (310) 618-5891
www.tornet.com

Facility for naming

Current Name of Facility:	Community Recreation Center
Proposed Name of Facility:	Ruben Ordaz Community Center
Location:	2252 Del Amo Blvd., Torrance, CA 90501

Candidate for facility naming

Name of Candidate:	Ruben Ordaz
Relation to City:	Community Activist; liaison; Pueblo H.O.A. President (1965-2010)

[Print Form](#)

Please provide explanation of why the City should take this action:

For over 50 years Ruben Ordaz served the City of Torrance in an exceptional and distinguished manner. As the Pueblo H.O.A. President from 1965-2010, Ruben established positive working relationships with the city's Parks and Recreation and Community Services Departments and the Torrance Police Department. He was an effective advocate for creating a neighborhood park and increasing recreational opportunities for youth and families; and worked diligently to reduce criminal activity within his community.

As a young father of three, Ruben raised the funds that resulted in the construction of the original recreation building which was dedicated in 1971, and still serves the Pueblo neighborhood.

With the recent dedication of the new Pueblo Park, Councilwoman Ashcraft asked that Ruben Ordaz receive special recognition. Mrs. Irene Ordaz, Ruben's wife of 67 years, has requested that the recreation building be named the RUBEN ORDAZ COMMUNITY CENTER as an appropriate way to honor her husband.

This proposal meets the guidelines and is consistent with the policies and procedures for the Naming of City-owned Land, Buildings and Facilities adopted by the City Council on June 17, 2008.

Please submit the completed application to:

City of Torrance City Clerk's Office
3031 Torrance Boulevard
Torrance, CA 90503

Once this form is submitted to the City Clerk, it will be forwarded to the Mayor for review. If it meets the guidelines for facility naming, the Mayor will forward the application to the Chair of the Council Committee on Naming Facilities. The Chair will schedule a meeting of the full committee where the matter will be placed on the agenda and open for public comment. The Committee will then determine whether the application and recommendation for approval will be brought before the City Council for consideration. If the application goes before the City Council, there will be a second opportunity for public comment before any action is taken. If the Council approves the recommendation, city staff will move forward with implementation of the Council direction to rename the subject facility.

If you have any questions regarding this procedure, you may contact the City Clerk's office at (310) 618-5870 or the City Manager's office at (310) 618-5880. You may also refer to the Torrance web site at www.tornet.com/facilitynaming.htm for the complete policy and procedures for naming facilities in the City.

CITY FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR NAMING

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| The General Aviation Center | The Police Department Building |
| The City Yard Facility | The Main City Hall |
| Public Works | The Fire Stations 1-6 |
| Fleet Building | |
| Alta Loma Park | Miramar Park |
| Columbia Park | North Torrance Library |
| De Portola Park | Osage Park |
| Delthorne Park | Paradise Park |
| Descanso Park | Pequeno Park |
| El Nido Park | Pueblo Recreation Center |
| El Nido Community Meeting Room | Riviera Park |
| El Retiro Park | Southeast Torrance Library |
| Entradero Park | Sunnyglen Park |
| Greenwood Park | Sur La Brea Park |
| Hickory Park | Sur La Brea Community Meeting
Room |
| La Carretara Park | Torrance Municipal Park |
| La Paloma Park | Victor Park |
| La Romeria Park | Walteria Park |
| Lago Seco Park | Walteria Library |
| Los Arboles/Rocketship Park | Skate Park |
| The Attic | Batting Cages |
| Las Canchas Tennis Complex | Torrance Veterans Memorial |
| Sea Aire Golf Course | Torrance Historic Museum |
| Seaside Heroes Park | Pine Wind Japanese Garden |
| Madrona Marsh Nature Center | |
| Roller Hockey Rink | |

Also considered in this category are any sub-rooms within facilities that are not specifically named.

CITY FACILITIES PREVIOUSLY NAMED

Albert H. Bartlett Senior Center
Albert Isen Transit Facility
Ben Haggott Reservoir
Charles H. Wilson Park
Dee Hardison Sports Center
Ed Ferraro West Annex City Hall
George Nakano Theater
George Stevens Annex City Hall (East Annex)
Guenser Park (Henry and Sophia Guenser)
Henderson Library (Isabel Henderson)
Herma Tillim Senior Center
James Armstrong Theater
Jason Kendall Field at Torrance Park
Joslyn Center (Marcellus L. Joslyn)
Katy Geissert Civic Center Library
Keller Memorial Triangle
Ken Miller Recreation Center
Kennedy Triangle
Louis Zamperini Field (Torrance Municipal Airport)
Zamperini Way (section of roadway between Airport Drive and PCH)
Maurice Wilson Little League Fields
McMaster Park (John Bach McMaster)
Russ Nolte Annex of the Bartlett Center
Sam Levy Teen Center (The ATTiC Teen Center)
Stanley Remelmeyer Telecommunications Center
Ted Tanouye Memorial
Torino Plaza (Frank Torino)
Victor E. Benstead Plunge
Watt Music Room (Ray Watt)

Ruben Ordaz Jr.

1928 - 2015 | Obituary



Ruben Ordaz Jr.

Ruben Ordaz Jr., a lifelong resident of Torrance passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family on March 21, 2015. He was born on March 14, 1928 to Ruben Sr. and Julia Ordaz. Ruben's greatest joy was his family; he would do anything he could for them. He had a contagious smile and a heart of gold. He is preceded in death by his mother, father, and brothers Tony and Genaro Ordaz. Ruben is survived by his beautiful and loving wife, Irene; sisters, Stella Gasset (Tony) and Maura Mendoza (Jose); brothers, Alfonso and Victor Ordaz (Maria); three daughters, Susie Thompson (Craig), Terri Guerrero (Steve), Bell Sola (Jimmy); four grandchildren, Deanna James (DeShawn), Steve Guerrero, Jimmy Sola Jr., Ruben Sola (Nicolle); seven great-grandchildren, Keana, Keara, DeShawn Jr., Tyler, Jackson, Shane, and Gavin.

Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Monday, March 30, 2015 at St. Lawrence Martyr Catholic Church in Redondo Beach. Reception is to follow at the Torrance Elks Lodge.

Published in Daily Breeze from March 27 to March 29, 2015

Old Neighborhood Has Long Outgrown Barrio Status: El Pueblo Thrives, Surrounded by Workaday World

May 05, 1985 | JULIO MORAN | Times Staff Writer

TORRANCE — The face of industrial Torrance is changing after nearly 75 years. So, too, is El Pueblo.

Surrounded by industrial activity, El Pueblo--which means "the town" in Spanish--remains a residential island in a sea of warehouses and factories. But rather than being deserted or rezoned for industrial use over the years, El Pueblo has blossomed into a vibrant, well-kept, close-knit neighborhood.

And except for the shadows cast by the Mobil Oil refinery towers on one side and the frames of multistory warehouses going up on the other side, the 111 homes along Del Amo Boulevard between Crenshaw Boulevard and Van Ness Avenue are typical of other middle-class neighborhoods in this city.

"When it comes down to the nitty-gritty, we are Torrance," said Ruben Ordaz, 57, a lifelong resident of the area and president of the Pueblo Homeowners Assn.

Early Reputation

The neighborhood is also called Del Amo and La Rana, which means "the frog" in Spanish and got its name because a nearby pond was once full of frogs. The neighborhood has overcome a reputation as a poor, tough barrio and come to be considered a community of concerned homeowners whose votes are courted at each local election.

"The politicians know that we got about 100 votes," said Ordaz with a smile. "We usually vote in a bloc, so when we call we get a quick response."

Getting a bloc vote is easier, Ordaz said, because many of the residents are related. Ordaz's father, who moved here in 1925, still lives on the block, as do his uncle, aunt and several in-laws. When a family member dies, property is usually passed on to a relative. Property values are slightly lower than in other neighborhoods in the city, but it still costs about \$120,000 to buy a two-bedroom house here. An empty 50- by 100-foot lot has recently been appraised at \$20,000.

High Offer for Home

"What do you think, just because I live in La Rana that I live in a shack?" Irene Ordaz, Ruben's wife, said she told a friend recently after the friend expressed surprise over her four-bedroom home. Ordaz said they have received offers of up to \$150,000 for their home.

And the crime rate, once a major problem, what with youth gangs and drug dealers during the 1950s and 1960s, has dropped. Last year, a community watch program was organized.

Torrance Police Sgt. Wally Murker, a community relations officer, said the area may still have more drug problems than many sections of Torrance, but other neighborhoods have more burglaries. "I couldn't say it was any . . . different than other neighborhoods in Torrance," he said. "There are a lot of good people living there and they've got a good community watch program."

For the most part, living in the midst of industries has not bothered the residents. In the early years it was a matter of not biting the hand that fed them, Ruben Ordaz said, so residents tolerated the industrial noises and smells. Today, tighter pollution controls have eliminated most of the concerns, and the residents have learned to live with what remains.

Grew Up in Area

"Sometimes you wonder if your coughing is not because of Mobil or if your house is not going to blow up," said Joe Torres, 42, a receiving clerk. Torres grew up in El Pueblo, and except for a few years right after he got married, he has remained in the area.

But the possibility of industrial accidents is not a major concern. "My kids talk about it sometimes, but they also talk about nuclear wars and earthquakes," Torres said. "It's at the back of your mind, but it's a way of life here."

Surprisingly, there has never been any serious talk of rezoning the street for industrial use, city officials said.

"It's almost like a historical area," said Jeff Gibson of the city planning department. "I don't think it will ever get rezoned."

But city officials did not always look so kindly on what was originally referred to as the Mexican Village.

According to the book "Historic Torrance," land in the 1920s was designated for five uses: business, residential, industrial, unclassified, and "special quarters for non-Caucasians." It was in the "foreign quarters" that El Pueblo developed as the residential district for the Mexican labor that worked at Columbia Steel and Pacific Electric Railway.

Treading on Constitution

The book says Jared Sidney Torrance, the city's founder, admitted in his autobiography that segregation in his fledgling town "tread pretty hard on the toes of the Constitution of the United States."

Even former Mayor Albert Isen, whose father and uncle built the homes in the 1920s so workers could walk to the steel plant half a mile away, said the houses were "substandard, because that's all they really wanted and all they could really afford."

Ordaz, a former steelworker and now a custodian with the Torrance school district, said the homes remained in poor condition for many years, primarily because of language and cultural obstacles that kept residents--most of whom came from the small Mexican town of Purepero, Michoacan — from acquiring building permits for remodeling their homes.

Now those houses have been passed on to family members who are U.S.-born and who speak English. Many of the homes have been improved, and Del Amo, once a dirt road, is now a four-lane street with a center divider.

Spanish, once the only language spoken on this street, is hardly ever heard now. Even the one weekly Mass celebrated at St. Joseph's Catholic Church at the end of the block is said in English.

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