

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: PROPOSED STREET NAME CHANGE FOR SQUAW CREEK DRIVE

BACKGROUND:

Earlier in 2021, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names changed the name of Squaw Creek to loway Creek in response to a citizen’s request. This name change was supported by City Council and the Story County Board of Supervisors. The creek signage has been updated to reflect the new name. At the time the name change became official, staff was directed to identify additional features within the City of Ames that have “Squaw” in the name; One such feature is Squaw Creek Drive.



The City has adopted an [Administrative Program for Street Naming and Addressing](#). This program and its standards are designed to name and number streets and addresses in a manner that assists emergency service agencies, the United States Postal Service, and the public in the timely and efficient provision of services.

Using the standards in that policy, City staff has identified **two potential alternative street names** for City Council to consider:

1. **Stonehaven Drive** is a continuation of the existing north-south Stonehaven Drive that ties into the east end of Squaw Creek Drive. This option would create an “L” shaped street. The segment lengths meet the criteria for “L” shaped street names found in the City’s *Administrative Program for Street Naming and Addressing*.
2. **loway Creek Drive** is consistent with the creek name change to loway Creek, which is named after a local tribe of indigenous people. The Parks & Recreation Commission, in a separate action, is recommending that the City Council change the name of Squaw Creek Park (approximately ¼ mile southwest of Squaw Creek Drive) to loway Creek Park.

Under both options, the existing address numbers can still be utilized. The parking ordinance will also have to be updated to reflect the new street name.

FEEDBACK FROM PROPERTY OWNERS AND EMERGENCY STAFF:

Staff has reached out to the five owners of property along Squaw Creek Drive for input. Four owners prefer the option of extending Stonehaven Drive. One has not responded. Staff also reached out to 9-1-1 personnel for input regarding how a street name change may affect emergency response. The Fire Chief has indicated that either name is acceptable, but favors Stonehaven Drive since it is a continuation of a current road.

The Police dispatch supervisor recommends Stonehaven Drive, as there is an existing street called “Iowa Avenue,” which could be confused with “loway Creek Drive” in an emergency. The address range of what is now “Squaw Creek Drive” does not overlap with the address range of Iowa Avenue; however, if Squaw Creek Drive was renamed to loway Creek Drive and was extended to the west, an address overlap is possible with Iowa Avenue. This could increase potential confusion about the location of an emergency.

NEXT STEPS IN NOTIFYING PROPERTY OWNERS:

Street name changes require Council to approve a City ordinance before the name change becomes legal. Once that is complete, staff will send change of address letters to all affected property owners informing them of the new street name change. Copies of the letter are sent to various City departments, the Post Office, Story County offices, and utility companies so they are aware of the change. If the property is a rental, the property owner is responsible for notifying any occupants of the address change. If the property owners request, staff is willing to assist with notifying occupants of the change.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the renaming of Squaw Creek Drive to Stonehaven Drive and direct the City Attorney to draft the street name change and corresponding changes to the parking ordinance for future approval by the City Council.

2. Approve the renaming of Squaw Creek Drive to loway Creek Drive.
3. Retain the name of Squaw Creek Drive.

CITY MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

In light of the offensive nature of the term for the existing street, and since the creek it references has also been renamed, it is appropriate to rename Squaw Creek Drive to a more suitable name. Staff has developed two alternatives using the adopted street naming policies. **After consultation with property owners and emergency services, Stonehaven Drive appears to be the preferred renaming option in creating an L-shaped street. Using this name also avoids potential confusion that might arise by naming the street after loway Creek.**

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as described above.