

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

BUDGET AND LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

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POLICY ANALYSIS REPORT

To: Supervisor Campos
From: Office of the Budget and Legislative Analyst
Date: March 11, 2013
Re: Cost to Rename the San Francisco International Airport



SUMMARY OF REQUESTED ACTION

Your office requested that the Budget and Legislative Analyst analyze the costs to the City and County of San Francisco of changing the name of the San Francisco International Airport to the Harvey Milk San Francisco International Airport.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many airports in the United States, including the 18 shown on the Attachment to this report, are currently named after individuals. However, the costs to rename each of those airports differed considerably. In November 2001, the San Jose International Airport was renamed the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport, for which the City of San Jose incurred total costs of \$850,000 to \$900,000.

San Francisco International Airport has estimated the costs to rename San Francisco International Airport at \$4,100,000. Airport officials based their estimate of \$4,100,000 in part on an estimated \$4,700,000 cost incurred by the Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, which changed its name in 2005. The Budget and Legislative Analyst has developed other estimates that show lower potential costs which would be incurred to rename San Francisco International Airport.

The estimated costs that would be incurred by the City and County of San Francisco (City) in the event of changing the name of San Francisco International Airport to Harvey Milk San Francisco International Airport would depend on City choices regarding the number of highway and Airport property signs to be changed to include the name of Harvey Milk. There is no City or State requirement that highway signs be changed to the new name if the San Francisco International Airport is renamed. The decision to change such signs and the way the Airport name is configured on such signs, is totally based on the discretion of the City. Similarly, changes in external name signs at the Airport and on Airport roadways would depend on choices made by the City about the extent and type of signage changes. A final factor that could affect initial costs is timing, since the signage changes could be phased in over a period of years.

Assuming that only the major external "signature" name sign on the International Terminal at San Francisco International Airport would be changed, and that no changes would be made to highway or Airport roadway signs, the cost to the City of the name change would be an estimated \$355,000. No other changes to highway or Airport signs would be required but could be made at an additional cost if

and when the City makes policy choices to change some or all highway signs and other Airport property signs.

If the City chose to replace some, or all, of the estimated 36 highway sign panels that currently contain either "Airport", "San Francisco Airport" or "San Francisco International Airport" and chose to have Caltrans replace such signs, an estimated cost averaging \$20,000 per replaced panel would be incurred, up to an estimated maximum cost of \$720,000 (36 signs x \$20,000). However, not all 36 road signs would need to be changed. For example, when the City of San Jose changed its airport's name to Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport in 2001, the City of San Jose elected to only change a number of highway signs in close proximity to the airport property. Signs further away from the property do not include Norman Y. Mineta's full name. If the City and County of San Francisco chose to have Caltrans replace the panels on six highways signs, for example, the estimated cost would be \$120,000 (6 signs x \$20,000).

Other identified Airport costs could potentially be incurred, but only if the City chooses to replace other external name signs on Airport buildings, Airport roadway signs and AirTrain map and directory signs.

The Airport's estimated costs of \$4,100,000 include the costs to replace all 36 highway signs, three external signs on Airport buildings (including the signature sign on the International Terminal), four Airport roadway signs, and AirTrain map and directory signs. Of the estimated \$4,100,000 the Airport estimated that it would need to incur \$3,230,000 to replace all 36 highway signs as compared to the Caltrans estimated cost of \$720,000 to replace the same number of signs.

The Airport's estimates exceed the Caltrans estimates by \$2,510,600, or nearly 349 percent, more than the Caltrans estimate. The Airport assumed that the Airport would administer contracts with vendors to produce, deliver and install the signs and provide traffic control during the installations. Caltrans' lower cost estimate assumes Caltrans would use their existing vendors who are already on contract to fabricate sign panels, install replacement panels and provide traffic control.

In addition, to the Airport's estimated cost of \$3,230,000 for all 36 highway signs, the Airport's total estimated costs of \$4,100,000 also includes \$876,000 to cover the costs of sign replacement on specific Airport buildings, roadways and AirTrain facilities.

Table 1 below summarizes a baseline, or minimum, cost associated with changing the name of the San Francisco International Airport to the Harvey Milk San Francisco International Airport and additional costs that could be incurred if the City opts to make additional optional signage changes. The cost estimates assume Caltrans is used to replace highway signs rather than the Airport administering the process. The optional costs could also be absorbed over time as part of the Airport's annual capital and operating budgets.

As shown in Table 1 below, the Budget and Legislative Analyst has estimated that a cost of \$355,000 would be incurred by the Airport, assuming only the main signature sign on the San Francisco Airport International Terminal is changed. Each option in addition to that assumes replacement of highway and other Airport signs. As also shown in Table 1 below, if the City opted to change all 36 highway signs and all pertinent Airport signage, and used Caltrans to replace 36 signs, the total estimated cost to be incurred by the Airport would be \$1,596,000. Some other costs such as stationary and business card replacement could be incurred as part of normal replacement costs.

Table 1: Baseline and Potential Optional Costs of Airport Renaming

Item	Item Cost	Total Cumulative Cost: Baseline and Options
Baseline: Replace signature sign on International Terminal (no highway signs or other Airport signs replaced)	\$355,000	\$355,000
Option: Replace six highway sign panels (through Caltrans @ \$20,000/sign) ¹	\$120,000	\$475,000
Option: Replace other external Airport signs	406,000	\$881,000
Option: Replace AirTrain maps and directory	\$47,000	\$928,000
Option: Replace Airport roadway signs	\$68,000	\$996,000
Option: Replace 30 other highway sign panels (through Caltrans @ \$20,000/sign)	\$600,000	\$1,596,000

¹ Six sign panel replacements is presented for illustrative purposes only. The City could choose to replace fewer or more highway signs.

BACKGROUND AND COST ESTIMATE DETAILS

Many airports in the United States, including the 18 Airports shown in the Attachment to this report, are currently named after individuals. However, the costs to rename each of these airports differed considerably, from several thousand to several million dollars, depending on what specific actions were taken to complete the renaming of each airport.

NORMAN Y MINETA SAN JOSE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

In November 2001, the San Jose International Airport was renamed the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport, when Mr. Mineta was Secretary of Transportation. According to officials at the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport, the City of San Jose incurred total costs of \$850,000 to \$900,000 to change the Airport’s name. Approximately two-thirds of these costs or up to approximately \$600,000 reflect the costs to change the external highway signs, including the design, construction, inspection and contingency fees, because the entire frame, poles and size of each sign needed to be replaced due to the new name requiring wider signs. According to Caltrans staff, the City of San Jose chose not to replace all highway signs with the new Airport name on them to control costs. The remaining approximately one-third of these total costs, or up to approximately \$300,000 reflect the costs to revise all the signage on the Airport’s property, including the terminals, interior signs, vehicle logos, and other changes to stationary, maps, business cards, etc.

CALTRANS ESTIMATED COSTS

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) staff confirmed that if the City and County of San Francisco chooses to change the name of San Francisco International Airport to Harvey Milk San Francisco International Airport, signs on the highways that serve the Airport would only be changed by Caltrans if the City specifically requests such a change. Furthermore, if the City requests such changes in signage from Caltrans, the City would be responsible for covering the costs incurred by Caltrans to make

such changes¹. Caltrans staff also advises that Caltrans does not routinely replace highway signs, such that there is currently no scheduled time to replace such signs.

However, the costs to the City to replace such Caltrans signs will vary depending on (a) the number of signs to be replaced/changed, (b) whether the sign panels can be replaced or whether the entire frame, poles and size of the signs need to be replaced, and (c) the extent to which traffic controls by Caltrans crews are necessary to make such changes.

San Francisco Airport staff estimate that there are 36 signs that contain the Airport's name on adjacent Highways 101, 380 and 280 that provide direction and/or mileage information to San Francisco International Airport. Assuming that the entire frame, poles and size of the signs do not require change, Caltrans estimates the total cost to replace the panels on each of these freeway signs at approximately \$20,000, including the new panel, freight, installation, traffic control and contingencies. Therefore, as shown in Table 2 below, changing all of the existing 36 highway signs would result in a total estimated maximum cost of \$720,000 (36 signs x \$20,000).

It should be noted that the Caltrans estimates assume that the sign panels could be replaced without having to change the dimensions of the signs. If the dimensions needed to be changed the cost would be higher. Given the number of characters in the name Harvey Milk and the number of characters in the various configurations of Airport names used on existing signs, the Budget and Legislative Analyst concludes that the existing sign dimensions would not need to be changed to accommodate the new name. This could be done by adding the name Harvey Milk but shortening or abbreviating other parts of the name (e.g., instead of "San Francisco International Airport", the sign could read, "Harvey Milk San Francisco Airport").

Table 2: Caltrans Estimated Maximum Costs to Replace Highway Signs

Total Number of Signs	Cost per Highway Sign	Total Costs
36	\$20,000	\$720,000

AIRPORT'S ESTIMATED COSTS

San Francisco Airport staff estimated the cost to rename the San Francisco International Airport to the Harvey Milk San Francisco International Airport at approximately \$4,100,000. San Francisco Airport staff indicated that this estimate is comparable to the \$4.7 million cost incurred by the Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, which changed its name in 2005. Although San Francisco Airport staff could not provide cost details regarding the Baltimore/Washington Airport name change, based on discussions with San Francisco Airport officials, over \$4 million of

¹ Section 4-04.13 of the California Department of Transportation Traffic Manual states that "when a street or facility name change is made on an existing sign on a State highway primarily for the benefit of the requestor, with no or only minor, improvement of traffic flow, the costs of materials and labor for said change, plus the current overhead assessment rate as determined by the Accounting Service Center to cover administrative overhead, shall be paid by the requestor".

Baltimore/Washington Airport name change costs were related to changes to interstate highway signs. It is not known how many signs were changed and how many complete sign structures had to be replaced as opposed to changing only the sign panels.

The San Francisco Airport's estimated cost of \$4,100,000 to change the Airport name assumes the need to replace (a) all 36 highway signs on all approaches to the Airport that are currently designated with San Francisco Airport signs, and (b) roadway signs, terminal buildings and AirTrain maps and directories on Airport property. As summarized in Table 3 below, the Airport's estimated costs of \$3,230,000 to change the 36 signs on adjacent highways with the Airport's name on each of the 36 signs, assumed that the Airport would administer contracts for all of the highway sign replacement work. Airport staff advises that the Airport did not contact Caltrans to determine such costs.

Table 3: Airport's Estimated Costs to Rename Airport

Highway Signs	Estimated Cost per Sign	Estimated Total Costs
6 Large	\$105,000	\$630,000
22 Medium	92,000	2,024,000
8 Small	72,000	576,000
36 Signs		\$3,230,000

The Airport estimates that the remaining \$876,000 would cover the costs of sign replacement on specific Airport buildings, roadways and AirTrain facilities, as summarized below:

- 4 Airport road signs at a cost of \$17,000 per sign \$68,000
- One International Terminal Glass sign 355,000
- One Terminal 1 Granite sign 389,000
- One Terminal 2 Vinyl sign 17,000
- 380 AirTrain Map and Directory signs 47,000
- Total \$876,000

In addition, Airport staff identified other potential costs for: (a) logo/branding name change, (b) marketing rebrand for international passengers and airlines, (c) maps, published schedules and magazines, (d) BART, Caltrain and SamTrans agency signs, and (e) letterhead and business cards that would be associated with the proposed name change at the Airport. The Airport did not quantify such costs. Some of these costs can be incurred as part of normal ongoing operations at the Airport.

SUMMARY OF THE RANGE OF COSTS

Caltrans' estimate to replace the panels of all 36 highway signs to include the name Harvey Milk would be up to \$720,000 as compared to the Airport's estimate of \$3,230,000 for the same 36 highway signs. The Airport's estimate exceeds the Caltrans estimate by \$2,510,000 or nearly 349 percent more than the Caltrans estimate.

In addition, the Airport estimates \$876,000 to replace the signs on various Airport buildings, roadways and AirTrain maps and directories. Therefore, the maximum estimated cost to replace all of these

highway and Airport signs range between approximately \$1.6 million (\$720,000 plus \$876,000) and \$4,100,000 (\$3,230,000 plus \$876,000).

However, the actual costs could be significantly lower than either estimate based on City decisions regarding:

- The number of highway signs to be replaced. Currently not all signs provide the full name of the Airport; the Airport is referred to on the existing signs as “Airport”, “SF Airport” and, on a limited number of signs, its full name: San Francisco International Airport”.
- Signs on the highways that serve the Airport would only be changed by Caltrans if the City specifically requests such changes. Therefore, if the City chose not to request specific changes to highway signs, no additional costs or minimal costs could be incurred.
- The extent to which the City wants to change signage on the Airport property. Currently there are three large external signs with the name of the Airport on them, including the “signature” sign on the Airport’s International Terminal.

Therefore, the City could choose (a) not to change all highway and/or Airport signs, (b) to prioritize which highway and/or Airport signs are changed, or (c) to change highway and/or Airport signs over a longer period of time. Such strategies would minimize the cost of renaming the Airport or potentially phase such costs over several years. For example, changing the name of the San Francisco International Airport to Harvey Milk San Francisco International Airport could initially include only changing the Airport’s main sign on the International Terminal, which, based on the Airport’s estimates, would cost a total of up to \$355,000 as shown in Table 1 above. All other costs could then be absorbed as part of the Airport’s annual capital and operating budget and over time as materials are reordered and replaced, without incurring significant additional costs. As also shown in Table 1 above, the total estimated costs to rename the Airport would be \$1,596,000.

FUNDING THE COSTS

In addition to appropriating Airport Funds to cover the costs associated with a change in the Airport’s name, private fundraising efforts could also be conducted to defray all or a portion of the costs to rename the Airport. In accordance with City Administrative Code Section 10.100-305, the Board of Supervisors authorizes any City department or commission, including the Airport, to receive and administer gifts of cash or goods, in accordance with the wishes of the donors. These Administrative Code provisions require that any gift of cash or goods greater than \$10,000 be subject to approval by resolution of the Board of Supervisors. In addition, after accepting each gift, departments must report each gift to the Controller’s Office, report gifts of more than \$100 on the department’s website, and annually report the nature and disposition of all gifts to the Board of Supervisors.

Caltrans staff also confirmed that Caltrans is able to accept payment for their highway sign services from third parties such as private companies or organizations. Such arrangements have been made for other facility name changes, including the renaming of the Oakland Coliseum to O.co Coliseum, for which payment for road sign changes was made by Overstock.com, the company that purchased stadium naming rights.

ATTACHMENT

- Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, named after Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court Judge, from 1967-1991;
- Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport in Birmingham, Alabama, named after Fred Shuttlesworth, an influential civil rights leader who founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference;
- Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport in Santa Rosa, named after Charles M. Schulz, creator of Peanuts comic, who lived in Santa Rosa, CA for over 30 years;
- Charlotte/Douglas International Airport, named after Ben Elbert Douglas, Sr., Charlotte, North Carolina's Mayor from 1935-1941;
- Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, named after William R. Hopkins, former City Manager of Cleveland, Ohio;
- Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, named after both William Hartsfield, longest-serving Mayor of Atlanta from 1937-1941 and 1942-1962 and Maynard Jackson, first African-American Mayor of Atlanta from 1974-1982 and 1990-1994;
- Jackson-Evers International Airport in Jackson, Mississippi, named after Medgar Evers, civil rights activist;
- John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York, named in 1963 after the 35th U.S. President John F. Kennedy from 1961-1963;
- John Wayne Airport in Orange County, California, named after an American film actor, director and producer who died in 1979;
- LaGuardia Airport in New York, named after Fiorello LaGuardia, Mayor of New York City from 1935-1945;
- Logan International Airport in Boston, named after General Edward Lawrence Logan who served in the Spanish-American War and World War I;
- McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas, named after Pat McCarran, Senator from Nevada from 1933-1954;
- Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport, named after Norman Y. Mineta, a San Jose native who was Mayor of San Jose, Secretary of Commerce and Secretary of Transportation;
- O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, named after Edward Henry O'Hare, a World War II flying ace for the Navy;
- Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, named after the 40th U.S. President Ronald Reagan from 1981-1989;
- Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, named after Alaska Senator Ted Stevens;
- William P. Hobby Airport in Houston, Texas, named after William P. Hobby, Texas's Governor from 1917-1921; and
- Washington Dulles International Airport, named after John Foster Dulles who served as Secretary of State from 1953-1959.