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## CITY OF SAN JOSÉ

### Naming of City-Owned Facilities NOMINATION FORM

Person Submitting Nomination: Zoe Lofgren

Address: 635 N. First Daytime Phone: 408 271 8700  
San Jose 95110

Name Proposed for Facility: Janet Gray Hayes Rotunda

Location of Facility: 200 East Santa Clara Street, San Jose, California 95113, between 4th and 6th Streets  
(Include street address, cross street)

Nature of Facility to be Named: (Describe use, clientele and any special geographic or historic characteristics)

The City Hall Rotunda is a landmark building that serves as a hub of civic and cultural activity. The Rotunda is one of the most recognizable and modern pieces of architecture at San José City Hall. Its iconic glass dome and glass walls which open to City Hall Plaza represent open and accessible government.

Is this site/structure of potential historic significance? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, please submit parcel number and a summary of bibliographical resources.

Appropriateness of Name to Facility: (Briefly characterize the nominated individual, group, event or feature. Describe why naming would be appropriate. If the facility is proposed to be named after an individual, attach no more than one page outlining a brief biography and significant contributions to the community.)

Mayor Janet Gray Hayes's biggest impact was on government itself. Her name should be attached to an icon of San Jose government - the Rotunda. 2024 marks the 50th anniversary of her election as the first woman mayor of San Jose and the first woman mayor of a major American city. She opened the door for women leaders. She supported the change to district elections, ensuring better representation of San Jose's diverse neighborhoods. With her leadership, San Jose adopted a modern general plan, which reigned in urban sprawl and focused on making San Jose better, not just bigger. (See attachment for more.)

Submit Nomination to: City Clerk, San José City Hall, 200 E. Santa Clara Street, San José, CA 95113

**FOR CITY CLERK'S USE ONLY**

Referred to the following Commission or Committee:

Airport ☐ Arts ☐ Child Care ☐ Disability Advisory ☐ Historic Landmarks ☐  
Library ☐ Parking Advisory ☐ Parks & Recreation ☐ Senior Citizens ☐ Youth ☐  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

10/05

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## REQUEST TO NAME THE CITY HALL ROTUNDA THE "MAYOR JANET GRAY HAYES HALL"

2024 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the election of Janet Gray Hayes as San Jose's pioneering and inspiring first woman mayor and the first female mayor of a major American city. Mayor Hayes was a dedicated public servant, community activist, caring wife and mother, and one of Santa Clara County's most respected public figures.

Ms. Hayes was born to John Paul Frazee, Jr., and Lucile Charman Gray Frazee in Rushville, Indiana, a small farming community. Her childhood home was a block from the railroad track. Throughout the Depression, daily itinerant or homeless visitors to the Frazee home seemed to know that her mother would give them a sandwich, if asked. Ms. Hayes inherited her parents' warmth. Her life in Rushville instilled in her a compassion for the needy and a lifelong interest in social change.

Ms. Hayes graduated with honors from Indiana University and received a Master's degree in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago. There she met Kenneth Hayes, a University of Chicago medical student from Berkeley, California. They married in 1950 and settled in San Jose.

Ms. Hayes' introduction to civic affairs came in 1959, when she appeared before the all-male city council to request a traffic light for a dangerous intersection near the elementary school her two oldest children attended. The council promised action, but no traffic light was installed. Ms. Hayes felt her concerns had not been taken seriously because she was a pregnant housewife. It was then that she began her life as a community activist while raising four children. She was elected President of the League of Women Voters of the San Francisco Bay Area and of Central Santa Clara Valley. Her community work led to her appointment as the first woman President of the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, before being elected to the San Jose City Council in 1971.

In 1974, Ms. Hayes successfully campaigned for mayor on the promise to "make San Jose better before making it bigger." Her agenda of managed growth led to the adoption of San Jose's first modern general plan, which reigned in urban sprawl and focused on improving neighborhoods.

After her election, a bewildered newspaper reporter asked how to address her, having referred to every prior mayor as "Mr. Mayor." Janet Gray laughed and said just call me "Madam Mayor." She easily won re-election in a hotly contested race four years later, with widespread support throughout San Jose. Despite her impressive victory, an Associated Press Headline dismissively described the triumph: "San Jose Woman Mayor Keeps Job."

"Janet Gray," as she was known by friends and colleagues, mentored other women, supporting the appointment of Lola Williams, the first Black female councilmember, Susan Hammer who later became the second woman mayor of San Jose, and Zoe Lofgren, who was later elected as a County Supervisor and then to Congress. She championed "comparable worth" pay for undervalued and underpaid female city employees. Her work and leadership brought national recognition to San Jose and Santa Clara County as the feminist capital of America.

During her first term, in a post-Watergate era where voters nationwide demanded honest and transparent government, Mayor Hayes steered the city through a corrupt political period. The then four-member male majority of the council made city decisions behind closed doors and dubbed themselves the "Fearsome Foursome." With Mayor Hayes's leadership, two of those councilmembers were defeated at the polls and the third resigned. A new era of open government began in its wake.

Mayor Hayes supported and endorsed "Measure F" in 1978 to create district council seats. She believed in equity and the need to give a voice to all of San Jose's diverse neighborhoods. The first district elections brought a majority of women to the city council and the first Mexican American female member, Blanca Alvarado, who later became Vice Mayor and a County Supervisor. The advent of district elections has brought a continuing wave of diverse representation in city government.

After retiring from public office, Mayor Hayes remained active in civic affairs. In 1983, she became President of the Board of Directors for the San Jose Museum of Art, just when the museum was on the verge of bankruptcy. With help from the museum's staff and other Board members, Mayor Hayes brought the Anne Frank exhibit to the museum, which broke all attendance and revenue records and was instrumental in rescuing the museum. Today, the museum boasts an impressive art collection and a talented, professional staff.

Mayor Hayes passed away on April 21, 2014. Her legacy of an honest, open, and representative San Jose government lives on.