



# Board of Supervisors

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March 25, 2024

**Dear Unincorporated-Area Resident,**

Alameda County is taking action to improve unincorporated community identity and we need your help!

## What's the issue?

When ZIP codes were first established in the 1960s, the United States Postal Service (USPS) assigned incorrect "City" (or Place Names) to over 30,000 addresses in the unincorporated Alameda County communities of Ashland, Cherryland, Hayward Acres, Fairview, San Lorenzo, and Castro Valley. For example:

- Addresses in the 94541 ZIP Code have a USPS Place Name of "Hayward" even though many in this ZIP code live in the unincorporated communities of Cherryland, Hayward Acres, or Fairview
- Addresses in the 94578 ZIP Code have a USPS Place Name of "San Leandro" even though many addresses in this ZIP code area actually located in unincorporated Castro Valley or Ashland

ZIP Codes and Place Names were created to help the USPS deliver mail, but incorrect Place Names in unincorporated Alameda County have had long-term, unintended impacts on community identity, public health data collection, and residents' ability to find and access essential public services.

In response to years of community activism, the County Board of Supervisors authorized the Community Development Agency to work with the USPS to formally request that the USPS change USPS Place Names to match the official names and boundaries of unincorporated Ashland, Cherryland, Hayward Acres, Fairview, San Lorenzo, and Castro Valley. To learn more about this effort and the proposed change, please visit [www.acgov.org/cda/USPSproject](http://www.acgov.org/cda/USPSproject).

## How can you make a difference?

As a local resident or business owner, you can write a letter of support for this project to help the USPS understand the importance of this change. Your letters will be included as part of the County's formal request. To help you get started, a sample letter is included on the following page. Please submit any letters or emails of support by April 24, 2024, to:

[PlaceNamesNow@acgov.org](mailto:PlaceNamesNow@acgov.org), or

Nate Miley  
Supervisor, District 4  
Attn: USPS Project Support Letter  
20980 Redwood Road, Suite 250  
Castro Valley, CA 94546

Sincerely,

Nate Miley  
President  
Alameda County Board of Supervisors

## HOW TO GET STARTED WRITING YOUR LETTER OF SUPPORT

A letter of support is a written declaration of support, encouragement, or advocacy for a cause. A persuasive letter of support can have a big impact on decisionmakers as they consider important issues. Letters of support for this project can be short or long, and can be submitted by email or traditional mail. Your letter can include any information you're comfortable sharing that you think would help the USPS understand the importance this issue. Customized letters are always more impactful than form letters, so we invite you to use the template below as a guide to tell your own story. These comments from other community members may help as you begin your letter:

- “Ashland and Cherryland deserve to be identified by their Census Place names.”
- “We matter. Acknowledge us.”
- “I live in Ashland, but my ZIP is San Lorenzo. I barely knew where Ashland was until recently, and my family has been here since 1950.”
- “If tiny locations in the mountains can have their own post office and zip code, then certainly highly-populated suburban areas can as well.”
- “Continuity within neighborhood boundaries are very important to our growing family. This proposal, once approved, would bring forth significant reinforcements to inter- and intracommunity ties and identity. The status quo is confusing and archaic. It also stalls progress and good governance.”
- “The current setup is confusing for community members and homeowners. I can only imagine how confusing it is and how many issues it causes on the governmental level. Please help build communities by approving the change.”
- “I believe honoring identity is extremely important and this truly seems like a change whose time has come.”

### SAMPLE LETTER OF SUPPORT:

*Dear United States Postal Service:*

*I live in the unincorporated Alameda County community of **YOUR UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITY NAME**. I support Alameda County's efforts to work with the United States Postal Service (USPS) to modify USPS Place Names (also called “Preferred Last Lines”) to match the official community names and boundaries of unincorporated Ashland, Cherryland, Hayward Acres, San Lorenzo, Castro Valley, and Fairview.*

*Thousands of businesses and residents in unincorporated Alameda County have USPS Place Names that don't match official community names. For example, my USPS Place Name is “**CITY**” **NAME YOU PUT ON YOUR MAIL**, even though I live in the unincorporated community of **YOUR UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITY NAME**. This impacts (**ME/MY COMMUNITY**) by (**DESCRIBE WAYS THAT THIS ISSUE IMPACTS YOU**).*

*Having USPS Place Names that match our unincorporated community names would (**DESCRIBE BENEFITS TO YOU/YOUR COMMUNITY – SEE IDEAS ABOVE**). I strongly urge you to support this long overdue change.*

*Sincerely,*

**YOUR NAME**