

**APPLICATION FOR PARKS, RECREATION AREAS  
AND FACILITIES AND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
FACILITY NAMING**

As a policy, parks, recreation areas, and facilities and Redevelopment Agency facilities shall be named in accordance with geographical, historical or ecological features indigenous to the park site or to the immediate vicinity of the site. Parks, recreation areas, and facilities and Redevelopment Agency facilities may be named for an individual (s) under the following conditions:

1. Where the individual has made a significant gift of land to the City of Merced and/or the Redevelopment Agency, or
2. In memoriam for an individual who has made a significant contribution to the City of Merced/Redevelopment Agency.

Recreational facilities or resource management areas within a park may be named for a corporation or an individual, living or deceased, who:

1. Has made a significant contribution to the protection of natural, cultural, or horticultural resources of the City of Merced, or
2. Has made substantial contributions to the advancement of commensurate types of recreational opportunities within the City of Merced, or
3. Has made significant contributions to the betterment of a specific park, consistent with the established criteria and standards for the designated facility.

In support of this policy, nominations for naming parks, recreational areas, and facilities and Redevelopment Agency facilities, shall be evaluated on the basis of the above criteria and upon appropriate documentation.

Person making nomination:(required) Regina A. Cortez

Address:(required) [REDACTED]

Contact Phone Number:(required) C.A [REDACTED]

E-mail:(not required) [REDACTED]

Suggested Name:(required) Joe Cortez  
South Station

**MERCED POLICE**

**Biographical Information: (Explain)**

JOSEPH (JOE) CORTAZ, THE 3RD OF 6, BORN IN 1941 ON  
MERCEDS SOUTH SIDE. MEMBER OF SACRED HEART  
CATHOLIC CHURCH FOR 77 YRS, THE SAME CHURCH HE WAS BAPTIZED.

HE WORKED FOR THE CITY OF MERCEDS POLICE DEPARTMENT  
RETIRES AS COMMANDER AFTER 32+ YEARS OF PUBLIC  
SERVICE.

**Civic Involvement: (Explain)**

OVER 50 YEARS OF CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE,  
WHICH INCLUDES 2 CONSECUTIVE TERMS ON THE MERCED COUNCIL  
AND OTHER VARIOUS CITY COMMITTEES. JOE WAS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE  
AMERICAN LEGION, VFW HONOR/COLOR GUARD. ALSO YOUTH ENRICHMENT  
PROGRAMS SUCH AS THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB, KWANIS, MERCED  
YOUTH FOOTBALL AND MANY OTHER AREAS OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND  
VOLUNTEER WORK.

**Connection to Facility: (Please explain in depth)**

JOE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
OF 2 POLICE SUBSTATIONS. INCLUDING MERCEDS SOUTH  
STATION, WHERE HE WOULD LEAD UNTIL HIS RETIREMENT.  
HE WAS PARTICULARLY PROUD THAT HIS MOTHER GOT THE  
CEREMONIAL RIBBON DURING DEDICATION.

**Reason for Nomination: (Required)**

WE WOULD BE HONORED FOR OUR DAD JOE, TO BE  
RECOGNIZED FOR HIS HARD WORK AND DEDICATION AS A  
POLICE OFFICER OF HISPANIC HERITAGE WITH 32+ YEARS  
OF SERVICE FOR THE CITY OF MERCED.  
HE ENDED HIS CAREER AS A COMMANDER OF MERCEDS  
SOUTH STATION. OUR DAD LEFT A MEANINGFUL IMPACT  
FOR ALL THAT KNEW HIM.

**Additional Comments: (required)**

OUR DAD WAS A FAIR, KIND, HUMBLE MAN OF  
EXCEPTIONAL CHARACTER WHO CHAMPIONED FOR  
THE CITY OF MERCED. THE PRIDE HE FELT FOR HIS  
DEPARTMENT AND COMMUNITY WAS UNWAVERING.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION,  
THE CORTIZ FAMILY

Date received By City staff: 6/4/24

Reviewed by: Christopher Jensen

Approved by: (Department Head) Christopher Jensen

Submit to City Council for Direction: \_\_\_\_\_

Date scheduled for review by Selection Committee: 7/22/24

Date person submitting nomination notified: 6/4/24

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION  
MAY BE ATTACHED**

6 ADDITIONAL PAGES ATTACHED  
LABELED A THROUGH F  
PLUS 2 PHOTOS

## EVALUATION SHEET

Name of City Facility: South Area Merced Police

Suggested Name: Joe Cortez South (Merced) Station

City Department/Selection Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Review: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Rate significant gift of land to the City (✓)**

<b>Significant</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>No Gift</b>
( )	( )	( )	( )

**2. Rate significant contribution to the City (✓)**

<b>Significant</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>No Contribution</b>
( )	( )	( )	( )

**3. Rate significant contribution to protect natural cultural, or horticultural resources of the City of Merced (✓)**

<b>Significant</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>No Contribution</b>
( )	( )	( )	( )

**4. Rate substantial contribution to the advancement of appropriate types of recreational opportunities within the City of Merced (✓)**

<b>Significant</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>No Contribution</b>
( )	( )	( )	( )

**5. Rate significant contribution to the betterment of a specific park or City facility consistent with the established criteria and standards for the designated facility classification (✓)**

<b>Significant</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>No Contribution</b>
( )	( )	( )	( )

In support of this policy, nominations for naming City and Redevelopment Facilities or resource management areas shall be evaluated on the basis of the above criteria and upon appropriate documentation.

## Joseph "Kokomo" Cortez

September 28, 1941 ~ April 5, 2019 (age 77)



***"Say nothing in grief, 'that he is no more', but in thankfulness that he was"***

Joe was the third of six children born to Aniceto & Josephine (Mendoza) Cortez, in Merced, California. He attended local schools and some college before joining the Army where he was stationed in Germany. After leaving the military, he embarked on a career with the Merced Police Department that would span thirty-two years. He started as a patrolman, working his way up to Detective, Sergeant and then was appointed Commander. He was also a S.W.A.T. team Commander/Negotiator and a graduate from the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia. After he retired from the Police Department, he was elected as a Merced City Councilman and served two consecutive terms.

Joe was also very active with the American Legion and the VFW, serving as a past Post Commander. He was also in many other clubs and organizations through the years such as Club Mercedes, the Boys and Girls Club and Kiwanis. He was an active participant with the Honor Guard, and also spent many hours hand making and painting crosses to be placed at local cemeteries for Memorial Day honors and acted as Master of Ceremonies at the yearly event. Joe has also been a familiar face in the community working at Ivers and Alcorn Funeral Home for the past twenty years. He enjoyed coffee with the boys at Country Waffles and Paul's Place and hanging out with Joe V. at local football games and the Legion. He also had fond memories of the many unforgettable family trips he took to Pismo. Joe loved his family unconditionally. He also loved his community and was proud to call Merced his home. He regularly attended Sacred Heart Church, the same church in which he was baptized.

He is preceded in passing by his parents, brother's Cheto, Jesse and Henry, and his son Steven. He is survived by Carol, his wife of 52 years, daughters Regina and Sonja, daughter-in-law Tammy, grandchildren Laina, Amanda and Guy, great grandson Zam, sister Maria and brother Joaquin (Sally), sister-in-laws Mary Lou and Clem, his four god children, and numerous nephews and nieces.

Joe was a humble, honorable and selfless man, and we will miss him dearly.

A visitation will be held on Sunday, April 14, 2019, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Merced. A Rosary will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, April 15, 2019, followed by a Funeral Mass at 10:00 a.m. at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Merced with burial to follow at Calvary Cemetery in Merced. The family asks if you can please refrain from wearing any fragrances due to his daughter's allergies. Services under the direction of Ivers and Acorn Funeral Home.

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1941 - 2019

# Community leader, police standout Joe Cortez laid to rest

BY JONATHAN WHITAKER

There was a heart-wrenching, lumber and unavoidable realization in the air this week as the Honor Guard laid three volleys from their rifles, and the bugler played Taps.

Joseph "Joe" Cortez — Army veteran, retired police commander, former City Council member, and Honor Guard member — is no longer with us.

Cortez passed away more than a week ago as he continued to serve the Merced community through the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

His smile was contagious, and he will be missed by many Mercedians of diverse ages and backgrounds.

Cortez was the big, strong, nice guy who kept service to country dear to his heart while helping to improve his hometown that is both challenged and blessed by growth and great cultural diversity.

"Joe had great compassion, and he



Joe Cortez

would work with residents to solve problems, but on the other side, he was tough as nails," recalled former Police Chief Tony Dosselt. "Joe was always looking out for everyone, and he was respected for that, and so we also looked out for Joe. We were a pretty close-knit family."

Dosselt and Cortez both served as police commanders under Chief Pat Lunney. The two career lawmen also helped open two substations in town as the department grew in the mid-1990s — with Cortez heading up the one in South Merced.

See Cortez, Page 3



Joe Cortez' casket is carried past officers of the Merced Police Department, including Chief Chris Goodwin, at right, after a funeral Mass at St. Patrick's Church.

Continued from front page

The two would later serve together on the Merced City Council. Cortez enjoyed road community support and remained on the council for two consecutive terms. After, he reportedly was asked by a variety of influential Mercedians to run for mayor, but he declined, opting to concentrate on family, friendships and local veteran affairs.

"He is the type of community member that we should all try to be," said Hub Falsh, who also served on the council with Cortez. "He also had a tremendous sense of humor. It was sort of self-deprecating humor that put people at ease. And he was a great storyteller."

Walsh noted that it was ways Cortez who would remind local leaders and the media about events for veterans, including for Memorial Day.

The big Memorial Day observance in Merced is held at the District Cemetery. However, it was Cortez — and the other "Joe" (local veteran Joe Vasquez) — who realized some years ago that there should be another Honor Guard ceremony at Calvary Cemetery here many veterans are buried. So they started an early-morning observance Memorial Day that continues to present.

And it's no surprise that Cortez was buried at Calvary on Monday.



Joe Cortez speaks during a Memorial Day ceremony at Calvary Cemetery in Merced.

Vasquez told the Times it will never be the same "without Joe."

An employee at Ivers and Acorn Funeral Home told the Times he was stunned when he heard about Cortez' passing.

"Our Joe?" he reacted to the news.

Cortez had served on the VFW and American Legion Honor Guards for hundreds and hundreds of funerals and burial proceedings, and also worked part-time over the years for Ivers and Acorn.

Late Monday night, Merced Mayor Mike Murphy adjourned the City Council meeting in honor of Joe Cortez.

### Obituary

Joseph Cortez was the third of six children born to Anticeto & Josephine (Men-doza) Cortez, in Merced.

He attended local schools and some college before joining the Army where he was stationed in Germany. After leaving the military, he embarked on a career with the Merced Police Department that would span 32 years. He started as a patrolman, working his way up



Joe Cortez with his American Legion buddies.

to Detective, Sergeant and then was appointed Commander. He was also a S.W.A.T. team Commander/Negotiator and a graduate from the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia.

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He enjoyed coffee with the boys at Country Waifflers



and Paul's Place and hanging out with Joe V. at local football games and the Legion. He also had fond memories of the many unforgettable family trips he took to Pismo. Joe loved his family unconditionally. He also loved his community and was proud to call Merced his home. He regularly attended Sacred Heart Church, the same church in which he was baptized.

He is preceded in passing by his parents, brother's Cheto, Jesse and Henry, and his son Steven. He is survived by Carol, his wife of 52 years, daughters Regina and Sonja, daughter-in-law Tammy, grandchildren Laina, Amanda and Guy, great grandson Zam, sister Maria and brother Joaquin (Sally), sister-in-laws Mary Lou and Clem, his four god children, and numerous nephews and nieces.

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A visitation was already held on Sunday, April 14, at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Merced. A Rosary was held



**Voted Best  
Steak & Lobster  
LUNCH**

**WED. - THURS. - FRI.  
10:45 AM - 1:45 PM**

**Fresh Fish: Halibut, Fish & Chips**

**4 Steak Varieties,**

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**Favorites: Stroganoff, Chicken Marsala, Pork Chops, Lamb Stew,**

**Babyback Ribs, Meatloaf,**

**Calamari, Torresnos, Octopus,**

**Bifanas & Deep Fried Shrimp**

**Sandwiches: Linguicia, Prego,**

**Steak, Chicken**

All Specials include seasonal sides, bread and butter.



Joe Cortez

South Station

Merced Police