

Attachment A

CIVILIAN PETITION FOR THE STUDY OF THE OFFICIAL RENAMING OF BROADWAY ROAD TO MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BOULEVARD

Submitted on November 15, 2017

1. Request:

Within two months of the acceptance of this petition, it is requested that Councilwoman Kate Gallego and Councilman Michael Nowakowski, who spearheaded the effort for the ceremonial renaming of Broadway Road to the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, will begin a study on the feasibility of changing it officially, including its funding and consideration for reconciliatory compensation for property and business owners.

2. Background:

2015

On January 19, 2015, it was reported that the original name of Broadway Road will officially remain and "King's name...will be posted at signalized intersections along its entire east-west length in Phoenix" (Phoenician Staff Report, "Martin Luther King, Jr. Is Official in Phoenix," The South Valley Phoenician, January 19, 2015).

Writing on phxsoul.com, Tremaine Jasper encouraged "people throughout the Valley of the Sun to be mindful of the fact that the work is not done regarding the naming of MLK Blvd" (Tremaine Jasper, "Dream Becomes Reality: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard Now Runs through Phoenix," phxsoul.com, April 20, 2015).

Furthermore, in a separate article, Michael Kelly of the Maricopa Community Colleges African-American Advisory Council, said "the ultimate goal is to make the name Broadway a thing of the past. Survey the businesses and residents here to determine if they want to name the street officially." (3TV/CBS 5, "Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard stretches west in Phoenix," April 20, 2015)

2017

On June 28th, in an effort to become more inclusive, the City Council voted "to amend its renaming policy so they (could) remove controversial titles without the support of 75 percent or more of property owners, as the city's policy generally requires." (Dustin Gardiner, "Phoenix Oks plan to change racially charged street names without homeowner approval," azcentral.com, June 28, 2017)

Mayor Greg Stanton stated, "We want to send a message about our values as a city. That means Phoenix should not have public street names...that demean our residents."

State Representative Reginald Bolding praised city leaders for "listening to demands to remove street names that are 'designed to tear our community apart.'"

One of the streets at issue on that date was the renaming of Robert E. Lee Street.

"...African-American leaders say renaming Robert E. Lee Street would send an important message about the legacy of slavery. They are also pushing to remove state Confederate memorials." (Dustin Gardiner, azcentral.com, "Phoenix Oks plan to change racially charged street names without homeowner approval," June 28, 2017)

"Ironically, Broadway Road is named for the Maricopa County Sheriff Noah Broadway, who fought for the Confederate Army in the Civil War." (3TV/CBS 5, "Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard stretches west in Phoenix," April 20, 2015)

Despite its efforts to support diversity and promote reconciliation, "Phoenix (is still) one of the few cities in the United States without a major thoroughfare named after King" (Phoenician Staff Report, "Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd Is Official in Phoenix," The South Valley Phoenician, January 19, 2015), as its renaming has stopped short of becoming official. To this petitioner, the delay could be perceived by most as demeaning. Choosing to move forward now in 2017 will serve as a reflection of our city's growing commitment toward inclusiveness and as a call to "all cities from Buckeye to Mesa to embrace the permanent name change" as well.

3. *Deadline*

It has been close to two years since the 2015 ceremonial dedication that served as "a beautiful reminder that people of all races support Dr. King's Dream" during a time unfortunately dominated by "the ugliness of racism and police brutality." (Tremaine Jasper, "Dream Becomes Reality: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard Now Runs through Phoenix," phxsoul.com, January 15, 2015)

Hopefully, in the next two years, the study will include the cost of funding as a future item for adoption in the 2019/2020 City Budget and the transformation will begin.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanne Scott Woods 15449 N. 25th Ave., #2012, Phoenix, AZ 85023


