



Request to Initiate Street Renaming Process

Request to authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to initiate the street renaming process per a memo received on June 19, 2020 from Mayor Kate Gallego and Councilwoman Thelda Williams (**Attachment A**).

Summary

In accordance with the City of Phoenix Street Renaming process approved by the City Council on June 27, 2017 (**Attachment B**) for street names that are derogatory or offensive based on City Code Section 18-1, this item requests the initiation of processes to change the names of the following Phoenix streets: "Squaw Peak Drive" and "Robert E. Lee Street."

The request from Mayor Gallego and Councilwoman Williams states: "Because the term 'squaw' is considered derogatory and offensive, as it has been historically used as a demeaning and degrading word for indigenous Native American women, it should not be the name of a street in our great city. Options to consider among these street names include: Peak Drive or Piestewa Peak Drive."

The request also states: "Robert E. Lee was a confederate general who represents historical institutions of racism and slavery in America, so the Phoenix street, which was renamed during the Civil Rights Movement, of his namesake is offensive and derogatory. Phoenix should not glorify what he represents with a street name in his honor. Replacing this street name does not try to change or remove history, rather it demonstrates our commitment to racial equity, justice and progress. Options to consider among these street names include: Freedom Street or Justice Street."

The current process as approved by Council requires two public meetings to be conducted in the vicinity of each of the streets proposed for renaming. However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff requests as part of this action Council approval to revise the process to allow virtual public meetings to obtain public input from the affected neighbors and community. Staff would conduct a total of four virtual public meetings, two for each of the streets proposed for renaming.

Responsible Department

This item is submitted by Deputy City Manager Mario Paniagua and the Planning and Development and Street Transportation departments.