



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: JULY 20, 2021

FROM: OFFICE OF THE MAYOR WARD: 1

SUBJECT: CEREMONIAL STREET NAME CHANGE FOR A SEGMENT OF NORTH ORANGE STREET BETWEEN COLUMBIA AVENUE AND CENTER STREET

ISSUE:

The issue for City Council consideration is a proposal of the City of Riverside for a ceremonial street name change located on North Orange Street between Columbia Avenue and Center Street. This portion of North Orange Street would gain a ceremonial name of Spanish Town Road in honor of the early settlement of La Placita de Los Trujillos, colloquially known as “Spanish Town.”

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Approve a ceremonial renaming of a segment of North Orange Street, located between Columbia Avenue and Center Street to Spanish Town Road;
2. Direct the City Attorney to draft a resolution;
3. Direct the City Manager, or designee, to identify the funding source through the Public Works Department.

BACKGROUND:

Noted as one of the oldest remaining structures in our region, the 159-year-old Trujillo Adobe was listed as California Point of Historical Interest No. P75 in 1968 and is designated as a Riverside County Landmark. On December 8, 2015, City Council approved a historic designation request to designate the adobe as City Landmark #130. This critical piece of Riverside’s history is one of the last remaining connections to the earliest days of what would become Riverside.

Constructed around 1862 by the sons of Lorenzo Trujillo (1794-1855), the early settler who guided many families across the Old Spanish Trail to establish La Placita de los Trujillos—now a portion of Riverside’s Northside and the Pellissier Ranch area of Colton—this settlement predates the City of Riverside’s establishment.

As the years went on and the establishment of Riverside occurred beginning in 1870, La Placita de los Trujillos was colloquially known as “Spanish Town.” It is believed that the term Spanish Town was originally meant as a derogatory moniker since the residents of this early settlement spoke the Spanish language. Since then, the Spanish Town name has been reclaimed and embraced by the Trujillo descendants and the larger community. So much so that in 2013 the Spanish Town Heritage Foundation was formed. A non-profit organization, the Foundation’s mission is to preserve and promote the Hispanic legacy of the Inland Empire’s first settlers by sharing their stories, creating cultural learning opportunities, and leading community efforts to restore and revitalize La Placita de los Trujillos.

The Trujillo Adobe itself has endured years of decay. It has also been a focus of preservation and expansion projects to ensure its valuable history, and the physical site remains a place of significance and education for generations to come. Despite this continued focus, much work remains to preserve and advance the legacy of Lorenzo Trujillo. In June 2021, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named the Trujillo Adobe as one of the “11 Most Endangered Historic Places” in the United States. Aside from the Trujillo Adobe site there are no notable public recognition designations in honor of Lorenzo Trujillo or La Placita de los Trujillos.

DISCUSSION:

In January 2021, Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson, Spanish Town Heritage Foundation President Nancy Melendez and support staff met to discuss ways of showcasing the diverse history of our community—namely, ways to honor the story of the Trujillos and Spanish Town. Out of that conversation came a proposal to ceremonially rename a street within the City of Riverside’s jurisdiction as an effort to showcase such history and highlight the contributions of the early settlers of Spanish Town. Due to its proximity to the Trujillo Adobe, it was determined that North Orange Street between Columbia Avenue and Center Street would be the best location for this street name change. Historic maps in the Spanish Town Heritage Foundation’s archives show Spanish Town Road as the original name of North Orange Street. With that historical documentation, the proposal for renaming not only has its independent merits but also obtains historical accuracy.

Section 19.040.10 (Public Projects) of Title 19- Zoning Code provides that any City Project for public purposes is exempt from compliance with the Code. As the proposed street name change is a City initiated project it is not subject to the process requirements in Title 19 – Zoning Code. However, in an effort to solicit comments and give prior notice regarding this project to stakeholders, door-to-door noticing by Mayor’s Office staff and Spanish Town Heritage Foundation volunteers was completed in accordance with Section 19.900 (Street Name Change) of Title 19- Zoning Code (Attachment 1 – Letter to property owners on North Orange St). An email notice of this proposed change was also submitted to the U.S. Postal Service, Riverside County Sheriff’s Department, Riverside Police Department, and Riverside Fire Department on May 25, 2021. Upon anticipated approval of this name change by the City Council, staff will submit the final decision to the U.S. Postal Service and others listed above to update their records.

The Spanish Town Heritage Foundation and the Mayor’s Office partnered to speak with interested stakeholders and inform local neighbors about the potential street name change. As this is strictly a ceremonial street name change, none of the surrounding neighbors would need to make any change to their address. Other interested stakeholders, including the Riverside Women’s Club, Mission Inn Foundation, Old Spanish Trail Organization, Northside Improvement Association, Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance and Latino Network were in favor of the change.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact of this project is \$1,000 for new signs. Cost of installation by staff is to be added.

Prepared by: Philip Falcone, Assistant to the Mayor

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia Lock Dawson".

Patricia Lock Dawson
Mayor of Riverside

Approved as to form by: Kristi J. Smith, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Letter to property owners on North Orange St.
2. Information sheet on history of the Trujillo Adobe
3. Proposed street sign rendering
4. Presentation